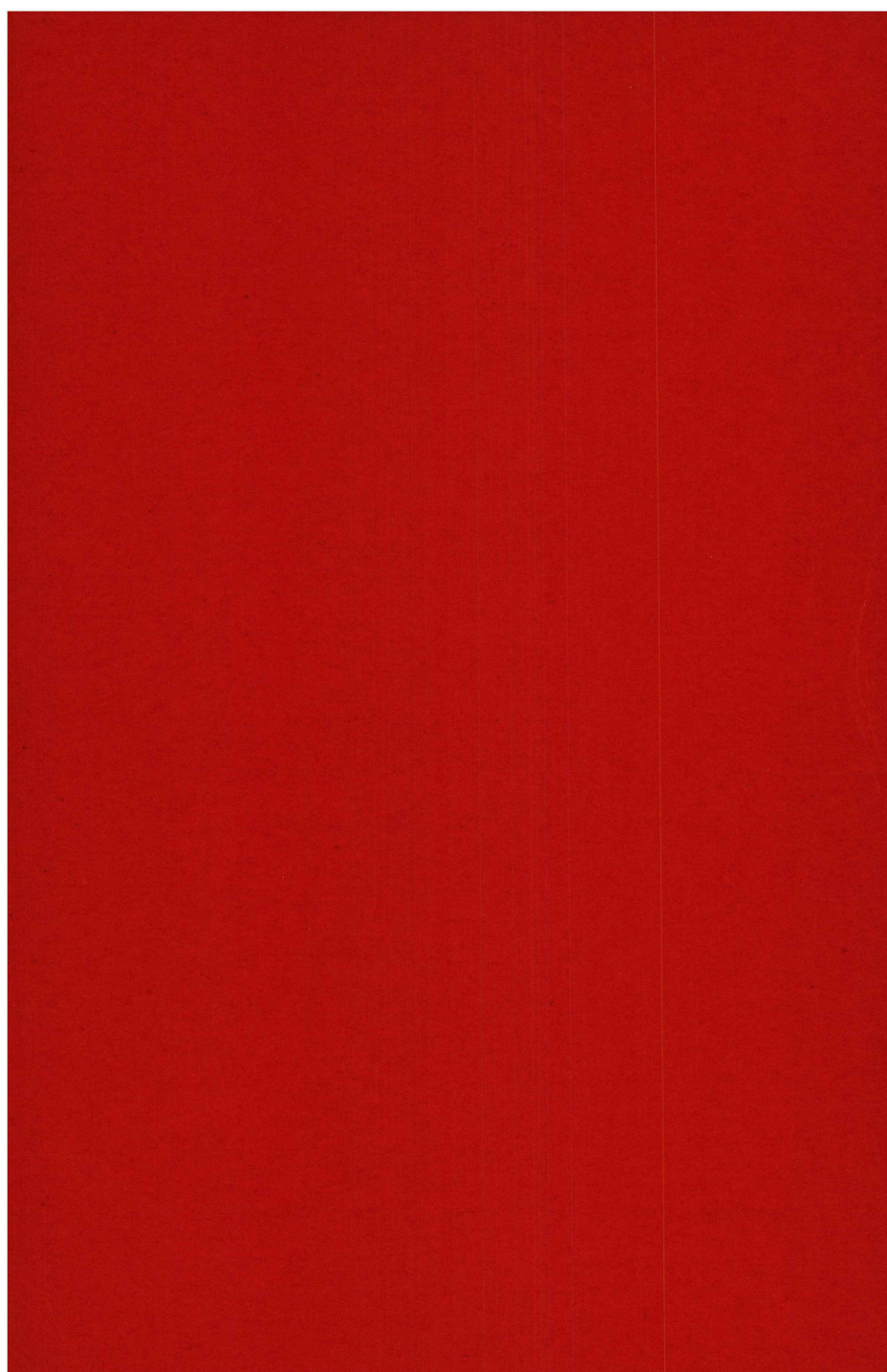


The
Constitution
and
By-Laws
of the
Evangelical and Reformed Church





The
CONSTITUTION
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BY-LAWS
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Evangelical and Reformed Church

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Adopted by the General Synod, June 16, 1936

Approved by the Classes and Districts, 1936-1938

Declared Adopted by the General Synod, June 23, 1938

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Amended by the General Synod, June, 1950

Amended by the General Synod, June, 1953

Amended by the General Synod, September, 1956

Amended by the General Synod, July, 1959

Note on 1959 Edition

This may be the last printed edition of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. If, as it is at present hoped, the required voting procedure on the proposed Constitution of the United Church of Christ can be carried through successfully and the Constitution can be declared in effect by the Third General Synod of the United Church of Christ at its meeting in 1961, both uniting constituencies should then move rapidly to come under the government of that document.

If that point should not be reached quite so soon and any further amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws of the Evangelical and Reformed Church should be needed, it is likely that they would be so few that publication of a new edition would hardly be justified. For any such amendments reference could be made to the published minutes of the General Synod which had adopted them.

On the basis of the foregoing assumptions, ministers and lay members of the Evangelical and Reformed Church will recognize that this edition of the Constitution and By-Laws will constitute not only a valuable source for frequent reference but also as time goes on will become a historical document to be preserved and cherished.

Further, the foregoing will explain why there have been included in the text three amendments to the Constitution which were voted by the General Synod of 1959 but which technically cannot be declared adopted and in effect until, at their annual meetings in the spring of 1960, at least two-thirds of the regional Synods vote their approval. The amended sections are 27 b-c-d-e, 33a, and 38c(1). Reference should be made to the printed Acts and Proceedings of the Eleventh Meeting of the General Synod (1959), page 182, paragraphs 1, 2 and 3; pages 164-165, paragraphs 1 and 2; and page 37, paragraph 2. Inclusion of these amendments in the text of this edition was felt to be warranted since, so far as the officers of the Church could see, there was little or no likelihood of an adverse vote on any of the three amendments to the Constitution already approved by the General Synod.

An ample quantity of the new edition is being printed to meet all foreseeable needs, but the President of the Church believes that his fellow ministers and members will, like himself, preserve with care the copies which come now into their possession.

James E. Wagner, President

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The Constitution and By-Laws of the Evangelical and Reformed Church

The Constitution

SEC- TION

PREAMBLE

- 1 For the maintenance of truth and order in the proclamation of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and the advancement of the Kingdom of God in accordance with the Word of God, the Evangelical and Reformed Church, formed by the union of the Evangelical Synod of North America and the Reformed Church in the United States, ordains this constitution to be its fundamental law and declares the same to have authority over all its ministers, members, congregations, and judicatories.

Part I The Church

NAME

- 2 The name of the body organized under this constitution is EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED CHURCH

DOCTRINE

- 3 The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are recognized as the Word of God and the ultimate rule of Christian faith and practice.
- 4 a. The doctrinal standards of the Evangelical and Reformed Church are the Heidelberg Catechism, Luther's Catechism and the Augsburg Confession. They are accepted as an authoritative interpretation of the essential truth taught in the Holy Scriptures.
b. Wherever these doctrinal standards differ, ministers, members and congregations, in accordance with the liberty of conscience inherent in the gospel, are allowed to adhere to the interpretation of one of these confessions. However, in each case the final norm is the Word of God.

- 5 In its relation to other Christian communions the Evangelical and Reformed Church shall constantly endeavor to promote the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

WORSHIP

- 6 a. Congregations are allowed freedom of worship. The forms and order of worship that are set forth in the Book of Worship and in the hymnal approved by the General Synod shall be followed as accepted norms.
- b. The Lord's Day and the festivals and seasons of the Church year shall be observed with appropriate services in the house of God.

SACRAMENTS

- 7 The sacraments of the Church, instituted by Christ, are Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

RITEs

- 8 The rites of the Church are confirmation, ordination, consecration, marriage and burial.

Part II

Congregations and Members

CONGREGATIONS

- 9 a. A congregation of the Evangelical and Reformed Church is a body of Christians accepting the standards of faith and doctrine prescribed in the constitution of the Church and organized and governed in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and by-laws.
- b. A charge consists of one or more congregations constituting a pastorate.
- 10 a. Persons who desire to be organized as a congregation shall submit a petition to the Synod in the form prescribed by the General Synod.
- b. If the Synod approves the petition, it shall superintend the organization of the congregation.
- c. A congregation, whether independent or belonging to another denomination, upon petition to the Synod, may be admitted into the Evangelical and Reformed Church by the Synod, provided said congregation complies with the requirements of the Church.

MEMBERS

- 11 Baptized persons are members of the Church. Baptized persons received into full communion with the Church by confirmation,

profession of faith or letter of transfer shall be communicant members. Baptized persons who are not yet communicant members shall be enrolled as unconfirmed members. Unconfirmed members shall be instructed in the Christian way of life and the standards of faith and doctrine of the Church.

- 12 Members of the Church shall live sober, righteous and godly lives and labor faithfully to bring others to Christ. They shall take an active part in the life and work of the Church. This shall include regular attendance at divine worship; devout use of the Holy Sacraments; diligent observance of private devotions; liberal financial and moral support toward the maintenance of the Church and her benevolent undertakings; obedience to her established law and authorities; untiring zeal in bringing the unchurched under her influence; and sincere endeavor to apply the teachings of Jesus to all human relationships. Parents shall provide adequate Christian training for their entire household.
- 13 Members guilty of misconduct, which brings reproach upon the Church, shall be disciplined in accordance with the rules of discipline.
- 14 Communicant members in good and regular standing shall have the right to voice and vote in the congregation, and also the right to represent the congregation on the Consistory or Church Council, the Joint Consistory or Joint Church Council, or other judicatories of the Church, subject to the constitution and by-laws of the congregation.
- 15 Members who have permanently changed their residences shall be urged by their pastors to obtain letters of transfer and, as soon as possible, shall unite with another congregation.

Part III Ministers, Teachers of Theology

MINISTERS

- 16 A minister is a member of the Church, called by Christ to the ministry of the Word, ordained and consecrated by prayer and the laying on of hands to preach the gospel, to exercise pastoral oversight, to administer the holy sacraments and to perform the rites of the Church.
- 17 A minister whose membership in the Church has been duly and legally established shall have the following rights: of voice and vote in his Synod; of eligibility to any church office, under such limitations as are provided for the respective offices, and to become a delegate to the General Synod; to share in the benefits of the church pension system, provided he has fulfilled his obligations to it.

- 18 A minister shall devote his time and his talents to the advancement of the Kingdom of God on earth, either in the pastorate, or in the general work of the Church, or in Christian work outside the Church. He shall cooperate in the work of the Church at large and shall fulfill such duties as the Synod or the General Synod may require of him. He shall avoid any unrelated avocation that would dissipate his efficiency as a minister.
- 19 A minister shall hold as a "privileged communication" any confidence or information of a confessional nature given him in the course of his pastoral offices.
- 20 A minister shall be a member of the Church Pension Fund.

TEACHERS OF THEOLOGY

- 21 a. A teacher of theology is a minister who is chosen to be a professor in a theological seminary of the Church.
- b. He shall be elected by the Board or Boards of a seminary according to the requirements of its charter. His election shall be confirmed by the General Synod. He shall be inaugurated according to the prescribed form in the Book of Worship.

Part IV

Commissioned Workers, Elders and Deacons

COMMISSIONED WORKERS

- 22 A commissioned worker is a member of the Church who is called, trained and consecrated for specific full-time service in the Church.

ELDERS

- 23 a. An elder is a member of the Church who is chosen by the congregation and ordained or consecrated to his office.
- b. An elder shall assist and support the pastor in the spiritual affairs of the Church. He shall take heed to himself that he may be an example unto others. He shall watch faithfully over the spiritual interests of the congregation, maintain order in the house of God, aid in visiting the sick, and minister according to his ability to the edification and comfort of the members.

DEACONS

- 24 a. A deacon is a member of the Church who is chosen by the congregation and ordained or consecrated to his office.
- b. A deacon shall aid in securing the funds necessary for the support of the Church in its various activities, foster the principles of stewardship, and dispense the charity of the Church.

Part V

Congregational Judicatories

- 25 Each congregation shall have a Consistory or Church Council and a Spiritual Council.

CONSISTORY OR CHURCH COUNCIL

- 26 a. The Consistory or Church Council shall be composed of the pastor or pastors and the elders and deacons.
- b. A Joint Consistory or Joint Church Council shall be composed of the Consistories or Church Councils of the congregations constituting a pastoral charge.
- c. The Consistory or Church Council shall have jurisdiction and oversight of the congregation and all its organizations. In all cases, unless there are legal difficulties, it shall in the charter be constituted the trustees of the congregation.
- d. The Consistory or Church Council, or the Joint Consistory or Joint Church Council, shall elect annually delegates and alternates to represent the charge in the Synod, unless otherwise provided in the constitution of the congregation or charge.

SPIRITUAL COUNCIL

- 27 a. The Spiritual Council shall consist of the pastor or pastors and the acting elders of the congregation.
- b. It shall be the duty of the Spiritual Council to exercise the spiritual oversight of the congregation. This duty shall be more fully described in the By-Laws.
- c. The Spiritual Council shall meet with all applicants for membership in the congregation and, in accord with Section 11 of the Constitution, shall admit those into membership who it is convinced confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and who seek to strive after Christian holiness.
- d. When it becomes necessary, the Spiritual Council may admonish those persons who are impenitent or who willfully persist in evil doing or who neglect their duties as members, or it may erase their names from the membership roll.
- e. If the spiritual welfare of any member should seem to require it, the Spiritual Council may encourage the member to transfer to another congregation which can more readily meet his or her needs.

Part VI
Denominational Judicatories
General Principles

- 28 The Evangelical and Reformed Church shall consist of ministers and of lay members organized into congregations which shall constitute Synods; the Synods, through elected delegates, and the Officers of the Church shall constitute the General Synod.
- 29 A judicatory shall have only such authority and powers as are committed to it by the body which creates it.
- 30 Officers, Boards, Councils, Commissions, and Committees shall be limited in action by the authority and power vested in them by the judicatory or body that elects or appoints them.
- 31 Officers, Boards, Councils, Commissions and Committees of the General Synod shall be amenable to the General Synod, and all departments or activities to the agencies that created them.
- 32 The Auxiliary Organizations shall conduct their activities in accord with the general policy and program of the Church and shall report regularly concerning their work to the General Synod.

The Synod

MEMBERSHIP

- 33 a. A Synod shall be composed of all the ministers, the lay members of the Synodical Council, and one delegate from every congregation within a designated territory, except that churches constituting a charge may be represented by one lay delegate if they so desire.
- b. One-third of the accredited members shall constitute a quorum.

GOVERNMENT OF THE SYNOD

- 34 The Synod shall have legislative, administrative and judicial functions.
- 35 The functions of the Synod shall be the issuance of instructions; the adoption of resolutions; the election of officers; the election or appointment of committees; the election of delegates and alternates to the General Synod; the examination and ordination of candidates for the ministry; the issuing of temporary license; the consecration of commissioned workers for Kingdom service; the admission and dismissal of ministers and congregations. It shall have jurisdiction over its ministers and congregations. It may petition and bring overtures to the General Synod, the General Council or the Officers of the Church.

- 36 a. The administration of the affairs of the Synod shall be committed to its Officers, Council and such other agencies as shall be provided in the by-laws.
- b. The Officers of the Synod shall be President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The manner of their election, their terms of office and their rights and duties shall be defined in the by-laws.
- c. The Synodical Council shall consist of the Officers of the Synod and one lay member. The manner of their election, their terms of office and their rights and duties shall be defined in the by-laws.
- 37 Discipline and judicial procedure shall be defined in the by-laws.

The General Synod

MEMBERSHIP

- 38 a. The General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church represents the whole Church, and shall consist of the delegates elected by the Synods and the Officers of the Church.
- b. Each Synod shall be represented by at least one minister and one lay member. However, each Synod shall be represented by an additional minister and lay member for every 50 congregations or major fraction thereof, and by an additional minister and lay member for every 10,000 members or major fraction thereof.
- c. The following delegates at large shall be advisory members of the General Synod and shall have voice but no vote unless elected as delegates by their Synods:
- (1) The chairman and executives of the Boards, Commissions and Committees of the General Synod, of the Historical Society, of the men's and women's national organizations, and of the young people's department of the Board of Christian Education and Publication;
 - (2) The presidents of the theological seminaries;
 - (3) The editors of the Church papers of the General Synod;
 - (4) Area Presidents and Full-time Presidents of Synods;
 - (5) The Administrative Assistant to the President of the Church;
 - (6) The Director of the Department of United Promotion.
- d. One-third of the accredited delegates, representing a majority of the Synods, shall constitute a quorum.

GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH

- 39 a. The Evangelical and Reformed Church shall enact its legislation through the General Synod.
- b. The following powers and privileges are reserved to the General Synod:
- (1) The adoption of the constitution.

- (2) The adoption of by-laws.
 - (3) The adoption of catechisms, books of worship and hymnals after these ordinances have been approved by a two-thirds vote of the Synods.
 - (4) The supervision of the editing of the Church papers and of all publications in which the doctrinal position and polity of the Evangelical and Reformed Church are officially expressed.
 - (5) The supervision of theological education.
 - (6) The establishment or dissolution of Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Auxiliary Organizations of the General Synod.
 - (7) The division of the territory of the General Synod into Synods, the establishment of new Synods, or the abrogation of existing Synods, provided, however, that congregations may be transferred from one Synod to another upon mutual agreement of the congregations and Synods involved, and upon the approval of the General Council.
 - (8) The regulation of its judicial procedure.
 - (9) The determination of the relationship of the Evangelical and Reformed Church in its association with other Churches and religious organizations.
 - c. Official representation of the Evangelical and Reformed Church in its association with other Churches and religious organizations shall be accomplished by nomination by the General Council, subject to the approval of the General Synod. Between meetings of the General Synod the General Council shall appoint such delegations.
- 40 The General Synod shall also exercise such other powers as are not vested in other judicatories of the Church, including the issuance of instructions, the adoption of resolutions, and the enactment of laws; the review of the proceedings of the Synods; the election of Officers of the Church and of the General Synod, and of members of the General Council and the administrative Boards, Commissions and Auxiliary Organizations.
- 41 a. The affairs of the Evangelical and Reformed Church shall be administered by the General Synod through the Officers of the Church, the General Council, the Boards, the Commissions, and other agencies.
- b. The Officers of the Church shall be President, First and Second Vice-Presidents, Secretary, and Treasurer. They shall be amenable to the General Synod.
- c. The membership, personnel, manner of election, and rights and duties of the General Council shall be defined in the by-laws. It shall be amenable to the General Synod.

d. The Boards and Commissions shall be administrative and promotional agencies entrusted with the management of specific work. They shall be created by the General Synod and shall be amenable to it. Their number, personnel, manner of election, and rights and duties shall be defined in the by-laws.

42 Discipline and judicial procedure shall be defined in the by-laws.

INCORPORATION OF THE CHURCH

43 a. The Evangelical and Reformed Church shall be incorporated.

b. The General Synod shall have power to determine the place of incorporation and the terms and provisions of the Articles of Incorporation.

AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

44 This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the General Synod with the subsequent approval of two-thirds of the Synods before the next meeting of the General Synod. If approved, the General Council at its next meeting shall declare the amendment adopted and in effect.

45 The by-laws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the General Synod upon petition of not less than four Synods.

The By-Laws

Part I

Sacraments and Rites

SEC- TION

SACRAMENTS

- 1 The baptism of infants and adults shall be administered publicly in the house of God, if possible. The forms provided by the Book of Worship of the Evangelical and Reformed Church shall be used.
- 2 The sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall be observed regularly in every congregation, according to the order of the Book of Worship of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Members of other denominations should be invited to participate in the Lord's Supper. A service should be held preparatory to it.
- 3 In the congregational records the dates on which the Holy Communion has been administered and the names of the members who have communed shall be recorded.

RITES

- 4 Confirmation, ordination, consecration, marriage and burial should be conducted according to the order of the Book of Worship of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.
- 5 The rite of confirmation admits baptized persons into communicant membership. Before admitting applicants for confirmation into full communion with the Church the Spiritual Council shall be satisfied that the candidates understand the fundamental truths of the Christian religion and are governed by them in their lives and conduct.
- 6 In the act of ordination or consecration, only ordained ministers shall officiate.
- 7 Marriage is an ordinance of God and shall be solemnized in accordance with the laws of the Church as well as of the State.
- 8 Christian burial is a religious rite that should be conducted in accordance with the customs and usages of the Church.

Part II

Congregations

- 9 A congregation shall adopt its own constitution and by-laws, which shall be in general accord with the form of constitution prescribed by the General Synod.
- 10 Whenever a congregation desires to become an incorporated body, a draft of the proposed Articles of Incorporation and the constitution of the congregation shall be submitted to the Synod, or to the Synodical Council, for approval before the charter is presented to the civil authorities. A charter shall not be approved that does not bind the congregation to be an organic member of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, and to be governed by its constitution and by-laws. In the charter the Consistory or Church Council shall be constituted the trustees of the congregation.
- 11 The official year of the congregation shall be from January 1 to December 31, inclusive.
- 12 Each congregation shall hold an annual meeting. Special meetings shall be called by the Consistory or Church Council according to the provisions of the constitution of the congregation. Upon the written request of one-tenth of the communicant members, the Consistory or Church Council shall issue a call for such a meeting within two weeks after the request has been received. Proper notice shall be given of the time, place and purpose of a special congregational meeting. A full and accurate record of the proceedings of all meetings shall be kept.
- 13 The property of the congregation, whether real or personal, and all monies and legacies, shall be under the care of the trustees, or those designated by the congregational charter, who shall hold the property as a sacred trust for the congregation and keep the church edifice and other buildings belonging to the congregation in proper repair and adapted for uses it approves. The purchasing or selling of property, the borrowing of money which encumbers the property of the church and the remodeling and erection of buildings shall conform to the respective state laws and be determined only by a majority vote of the members assembled at duly-convened congregational or corporate meetings and entitled to vote thereon, or as provided by the local constitution and by-laws.
- 14 The common interests of two or more congregations united in one pastoral charge shall be committed to a Joint Consistory or Joint Church Council composed of the members of the Consistories or Church Councils of the congregations included in a charge. Property interests of such a charge shall be committed to a joint board of trus-

tees in cases where the Joint Consistory or Joint Church Council does not comprise the joint board of trustees. A congregation shall not withdraw from such a charge without the permission of the Synod.

- 15 On the dissolution of a congregation, the Synod with which it was connected shall have jurisdiction over its members and transfer them to the congregations which they may select. The official character of the elders and deacons and trustees shall immediately cease. The Synod shall also have charge and control of the property of said dissolved congregation. If the property is sold by the Synod the proceeds shall be used in supporting new missions under the Board of National Missions, or by the Synod in cooperation with the Board, and the local Synod shall be empowered to make the final decisions in the use of such funds. The Synod shall determine any case of discipline begun by the Spiritual Council and not completed.
- 16 If a congregation or a Synod withdraws from the jurisdiction of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, the property of said congregation or Synod shall revert to the charge and control of the judicatory immediately above, in the case of a congregation to the Synod, and of a Synod to the General Synod. This paragraph shall not apply, however, to congregations which were not on June 26, 1934, subject to or governed by laws regularly enacted and then in force, providing for such reversion of congregational property, nor shall this paragraph apply to congregations associated with the Church only through their pastors, if such congregations become members of the Church within ten years after the adoption of the constitution.
- 17 Each congregation should have a cabinet, consisting of the Consistory or Church Council and the presidents or duly selected representatives of the various church organizations, to coordinate and promote the entire program of the Church.
- 18 The charge shall pay the prorated expenses of the pastor or pastors and delegate or delegates to all meetings of the Synod. Each organization shall pay the expenses of its delegate or delegates to the fall meeting.
- 19 The General Council is authorized to permit the organization of deaconess congregations within recognized deaconess sisterhoods of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, the membership of which shall be restricted to consecrated deaconesses. The pastor of such a congregation shall be called by the Board of Directors of the corporate body with which the deaconess sisterhood is associated, after due conference with the Placement Committee. The call and confirmation thereof shall be in the manner prescribed in Section 69 hereof.

Part III

Ministers

AUTHORITY OF THE SYNOD

- 20 The authority for licensure, ordination, consecration and installation shall be vested in the Synod.

STUDENTS FOR THE MINISTRY

- 21 A student for the ministry is a member of a congregation of the Church who believes himself to be divinely called and enters upon a course of study to prepare himself for the ministry.
- 22 a. A student for the ministry shall be under the care of the Synod to which the congregation of which he is a member belongs.
- b. The Committee on Church and Ministry of the Synod shall examine him as to his physical, mental, moral and spiritual fitness and, if he is found satisfactory, shall supervise his studies and his general preparation for the ministry.
- c. He shall pursue his studies in one of the theological seminaries of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, or with the approval of the Committee on Church and Ministry of the Synod, in some other accredited seminary.
- d. Student loans shall be granted to him only upon the recommendation of the Committee on Church and Ministry to the proper organization granting such aid.
- e. He shall report to the Committee on Church and Ministry of the Synod as to his progress, and shall appear before such Committee when requested to do so.
- f. A student who, having completed the prescribed course of theological training, continues in postgraduate study shall normally have the status of a student for the ministry.
- 23 A student for the ministry shall not accept a call to a pastorate, nor shall a charge nominate or elect a student for the ministry to become its pastor.

CANDIDATES FOR ORDINATION

- 24 At or near the time of the completion of the prescribed course of theological training, but not more than six months prior to graduation, a student for the ministry may apply to his Synod for acceptance as a candidate for ordination. As prerequisites to ordination he must be at least twenty-one years of age and a graduate of a theological seminary of the Evangelical and Reformed Church or of another accredited seminary.
- 25 a. Application for ordination shall be made to the President of the Synod, who shall refer it to the Committee on Church and Ministry of the Synod, which shall examine the applicant and report to the Synod.

b. The Committee on Church and Ministry of the Synod shall examine the student as to his general fitness, his reasons for seeking the office of the Christian ministry, his theological attainments and his native ability, as well as his Christian faith and life.

c. If the applicant has not been under the care of the Synod while studying for the ministry, the approval of the General Council, in addition to that of the Committee on Church and Ministry of the Synod, shall be required. Such an applicant must serve under a temporary license for a period of at least one year before he can be ordained.

d. An applicant shall be accepted as a candidate for ordination by a two-thirds vote of the Synod, or by unanimous vote of both the Committee on Church and Ministry and the Synodical Council.

e. He shall publicly read and subscribe to the formula prepared by the General Synod in which he is pledged to the doctrinal standards of the Church, either at the time of his acceptance by his Synod or, if his acceptance has been made by vote of the Committee on Church and Ministry and the Synodical Council, at the next meeting of his Synod or of the Synod to which he has been assigned.

26 A candidate for ordination shall be under the jurisdiction of the Synod which admits him to candidacy, but shall be referred by that Synod to the General Council, which shall assign him to a Synod for service.

27 a. A candidate for ordination shall be eligible to accept a call to a pastorate when he has been referred to the General Council and has been assigned by the General Council to a Synod for service.

b. In special cases a temporary license authorizing the applicant to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments and rites of the Church may be granted for a period of one year or less by the President of the Synod with the approval of the President of the Church.

ORDINATION

28 a. Upon the completion of his theological education, and contingent upon a call from a charge, a candidate for ordination shall be ordained according to the prescribed form in the Book of Worship of the Church. The President of the Synod, in conference with the applicant, shall appoint a committee to ordain him.

b. Ordination shall usually be dependent upon a call from a charge, but, with the approval of the President of the Church, a Synod may ordain applicants when, in the judgment of the Committee on Church and Ministry of the Synod, the nature of their work justifies ordination.

c. All ordination certificates shall be signed by the President of the

Church as well as by the President of the Synod under whose authority such ordination shall have been effected.

MINISTERS FROM OTHER DENOMINATIONS

29 a. A minister who has been ordained by another denomination and who has met the educational requirements of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and desires to enter its ministry shall submit a written application for the Privilege of Call. He shall be examined by the Committee on Church and Ministry of the Synod. If approved by that Committee, he may be granted the Privilege of Call by the General Council.

b. After one year of service in a pastorate or other office of the Church he shall apply to the Committee on Church and Ministry of the Synod for reception into full membership. Upon its recommendation and with the approval of the President of the Church he shall be received into the ministry of the Church.

c. His formal installation as pastor of a charge may take place only after he has been received into the ministry of the Church.

d. A minister of another denomination in correspondence with the General Synod who has become a pastor of a charge composed of denominational units at least one of which is associated with this Church may be enrolled for a definite period as a member of a Synod, and during that period may have the rights and privileges of such membership except that he shall not be elected an officer of the Synod or a delegate to the General Synod, or serve in either a permanent or special judicial or administrative capacity.

30 A synodical Placement Committee shall not approve, nor shall a charge consider, an applicant from another denomination unless he has been granted the Privilege of Call by the General Council.

MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH

31 The term of service of a pastor shall be without limit except as hereinafter provided.

32 a. A minister shall have the right to confer with the Placement Committee of any Synod concerning a vacant pulpit.

b. A minister shall not serve a vacant church without the consent of the Placement Committee of the Synod.

33 A minister shall not perform any ministerial act or officiate in any way in the charge of a pastor without his consent.

34 a. A minister under 65 years of age, no longer actively engaged in Christian service such as in the pastorate or in a denominational agency or in interdenominational service, and taking up some other

work, shall apply for leave of absence for one-year periods. He shall direct his application for leave of absence to the President of the Synod for action by the Synod.

b. Such leave of absence shall not exceed five consecutive years. Thereafter, the minister shall re-enter active Christian service, or the Synod shall erase his name from the roll of ministers.

c. A minister on leave of absence shall not be eligible for office in a Synod or in the General Synod.

35 A pastor, when submitting his resignation to the charge, shall send a copy of such resignation to the President of the Synod not later than three days following the submission of such resignation to the charge.

36 When a minister decides to retire, he shall inform the President of his Synod.

37 A minister retiring from the active ministry by reason of old age or sickness shall not thereby forfeit his ministerial membership in the Church.

38 a. When a pastor retires by reason of old age or incapacity for further labor, the charge may elect him as pastor emeritus, with or without salary, but with no pastoral authority or duty.

b. When an employee of the General Synod or of a Board or theological seminary or other agency of the Church retires because of old age or illness, the General Synod or Board or other agency may follow a suitable adaptation of the above procedure.

Part IV

Commissioned Workers

39 A commissioned worker is a member of the Church who has been set apart and consecrated by a Synod for full-time service for a special ministry. This service may be rendered in a local congregation, in the mission fields of the Church, through one of the administrative agencies of the Church, or in one of the benevolent or educational institutions of the Church. Those eligible for commissioning shall include directors of Christian education, deaconesses, parish workers, ministers of music, teachers in Church-related schools, medical and agricultural missionaries, and others called to similar special ministries.

40 A commissioned worker shall have adequate training for his specific ministry in a school recognized by the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Normally this shall consist of at least one year of formal training beyond the college degree, or at least three years of experience and special study beyond that degree. The Committee on Church

and Ministry of the Synod shall determine the qualifications of the worker and shall, with the approval of the President of the Church, recommend his consecration.

- 41 A commissioned worker shall devote himself to his ministry and shall avoid any unrelated avocation that would impair his service to the Church.
- 42 A commissioned worker shall have full status as a member of a local congregation. In addition, he shall be listed on the roll of his Synod as a commissioned worker, shall be eligible to serve on standing committees of the Synod, and shall be accorded voice and vote in the proceedings of the Synod.
- 43 A commissioned worker who takes up some other calling shall resign or apply to the Synod for a leave of absence for one-year periods. In no case shall leave of absence be granted for more than three consecutive years. Thereafter, the worker shall resume his ministry in the Church or the Synod shall remove his name from the roll of commissioned workers.

Part V

Congregational Judicatories

Consistory or Church Council

- 44
 - a. Elders, deacons and trustees shall be elected by a majority of the votes cast at a congregational meeting. Their number in a congregation, the manner of their election, and their term of office shall be determined by the constitution or by-laws of the congregation. If possible, each congregation shall have at least two elders and two deacons.
 - b. When elected for the first term, elders and deacons shall be publicly ordained or consecrated to their office. After their ordination or consecration, they, with those who have been re-elected, shall be installed. If the congregation desires it, the trustees may also be installed.
 - c. Elders, deacons and trustees shall remain in office until their successors are inducted into office.
- 45 Nominations for the offices of elder, deacon and trustee shall be made by the Consistory or Church Council, which shall present the names of one or two persons for each office, unless otherwise provided in the constitution of the congregation. Public notice of the nominations shall be given from the pulpit, by bulletin or letter, at least one week before the election. At the meeting for the election an equal number of nominations for each office may be made by the congregation. A person shall not be voted for unless regularly nominated.

All nominees must be in full communion with the Church and earnestly devoted to the cause of Christ.

46 a. The Consistory or Church Council shall effect its own organization. The President shall be either a pastor or an elder, unless provided otherwise in the constitution or by-laws of the congregation.

b. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum, unless otherwise provided in the constitution or by-laws of the congregation.

47 a. The Consistory or Church Council shall hold stated monthly or quarterly meetings. It may hold such special meetings as are called by the President or, in the event of his absence or inability or unwillingness to act, by the Secretary when requested in writing to do so by one-third of the members.

b. Proper notice of special meetings of the Consistory or Church Council shall be given to all the members.

48 a. At least ten days before the annual meeting of the Synod the credentials of the delegates thereto shall be sent to the Secretary of the Synod by the President or the Secretary of the Consistory or Church Council or the Joint Consistory or Joint Church Council.

b. Within sixty days after the meeting of the Synod the Consistory or Church Council, or the Joint Consistory or Joint Church Council, shall meet, receive the report of its delegates, and act upon all matters referred to it by the Synod. Matters of vital interest, requiring congregational action, shall be referred to the congregation. Immediately thereafter, said action shall be reported by the Consistory or Church Council, or the Joint Consistory or Joint Church Council, to the Secretary of the Synod.

49 a. In managing the general affairs of the charge the Consistory or Church Council, or the Joint Consistory or Joint Church Council, shall call meetings of the charge, and shall make provision for the apportionments of the Church and other benevolent purposes, the distribution of alms through the deacons, and the auditing of financial accounts. It shall make complete provision for the adequate support of the pastor.

b. It shall keep a complete and accurate record of its proceedings, and of all monies received and all expenditures of monies for congregational and benevolent purposes.

c. It shall direct either the pastor of the charge or the Secretary of the Consistory or Church Council to keep a complete and accurate record of baptisms, confirmations, communicants, reception of new members, transfers, suspensions, erasures of names, marriages and deaths.

d. It shall be the custodian of all congregational records, and shall submit any or all of them to the Synod when occasion requires it and the Synod requests it.

50 All records shall be the property of the congregation. Upon the dissolution of the congregation they shall become the property of the Synod.

Spiritual Council

51 a. The Spiritual Council shall meet at stated intervals. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum. The pastor of the congregation shall be the chairman. If there is no pastor, one of the elders may be chosen as temporary chairman.

b. At any of its meetings applications for membership or for transfer may be considered.

c. Near the close of each year the Spiritual Council shall review the life and work of the congregation and its organizations for the past year, seeking means by which members of the congregation may be further aided "to attain the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

d. The Spiritual Council shall be responsible for visiting the sick, winning the unchurched, restoring the erring, providing for Christian instruction, voicing the congregation's concern for moral and spiritual conditions in the community, and in other ways seeking to exercise its responsibility of spiritual oversight. The elders shall provide the elements for the Lord's Supper and, when requested by the pastor, aid in their distribution.

e. Each year the Spiritual Council shall consider the spiritual life of each member. Particularly shall it encourage each member to partake regularly of the Holy Communion, contribute to the support of the Lord's work according to his means, and attend the services of worship with faithfulness. If a member shall fall short of any of these requirements for one year, the Spiritual Council shall make special effort, through brotherly visitation and counsel, to correct the fault. If at the end of a second year efforts to restore the erring have failed, the Spiritual Council shall encourage him to join another congregation, or it may erase his name from the membership roll.

f. When reviewing the spiritual life of the members, the Spiritual Council shall call the attention of the organizations within the congregation to those whom it feels to be ready for large responsibilities and places of leadership. It shall call the attention of the Committee on Church and Ministry to those who it thinks may be qualified for full-time religious vocation.

g. In all cases of discipline which might lead to expulsion of a member, the procedure shall be in conformity with the By-Laws on discipline and judicial procedure.

Committee on Church and Ministry

52 Each charge shall have a Committee on Church and Ministry. This committee shall be preferably a committee of the Spiritual Council or of the Consistory or Church Council or the Joint Consistory or Joint Church Council. It shall be appointed or elected annually, and shall normally consist of not less than three nor more than five members, excepting in such cases in which the number of congregations constituting a charge shall make necessary a larger committee so as to give each congregation proper representation.

53 The Committee on Church and Ministry shall:

- a. Serve as the channel through which the General Synod's Commission on Church and Ministry and the Synod's Committee on Church and Ministry can function on the congregational level.
- b. Cultivate and maintain a wholesome and effective relationship between pastor and people.
- c. Recommend to and urge the pastor to avail himself of in-service training opportunities, such as professional conferences, graduate study, seminars, retreats, and study-visits to other parishes.
- d. Act as a committee on pastoral vacancy and supply when the need arises, with the provision that for this purpose the committee's membership may be augmented by additional appointments made by the Consistory or Church Council or the Joint Consistory or Joint Church Council, or by the charge.
- e. Give attention and direction to young people who show special promise for and interest in possible full-time Christian service.
- f. Seek, in cooperation with the pastor, the development of special lay ministries in evangelism, fellowship, and community action.
- g. Share with the pastor the responsibility for filling out the parochial report to the Synod and any special report which the Synod may request. Two copies of such report shall be forwarded to the Synod President, one of which shall become a part of his permanent file.

Part VI
Denominational Judicatories
The Synod
Meetings

GENERAL PROCEDURES

- 54 a. The Synod shall meet twice every year, in the spring and fall, according to a schedule arranged by the General Council, subject to a date recommended by the Synodical Council.
- b. The spring meeting shall be for legislative purposes.
- c. Synods in widely scattered territory may hold their spring meetings biennially, subject to the approval of the General Council.
- d. Each minister shall prepare a parochial report and send it thirty days before the spring meeting of the Synod to the President of the Synod.
- e. The fall meeting, which may be held in sections, shall be in the nature of a workers' conference, and shall have no legislative power. To this fall meeting every congregation shall send its pastor and official delegates representing the congregation, the Consistory or Church Council, the church school, and the men's, women's and young people's organizations.
- f. Special meetings may be called by the Synodical Council for the consideration of items specified in the call. At least twenty days' previous notice shall be given for such special meeting.
- g. With the exception of an overture addressed to the General Synod, all motions, resolutions, petitions and overtures shall be adopted by a majority vote. An overture to the General Synod shall require a two-thirds vote.
- h. The Synod shall adhere to accepted parliamentary law and rules of order.
- i. The Synod may elect a moderator and a vice-moderator to preside over its legislative sessions.

PROGRAM AND ORDER OF BUSINESS

- 55 I. Religious Services
- II. Organization
1. Record of attendance
2. Defining the bar of the house
- III. Adoption of the program and schedule

- IV. Announcement of the appointment of the conference committees:
 - 1. Minutes of the General Synod
 - 2. Statement of the General Council and report of the President of the Synod
 - 3. Overtures
 - 4. Nominations
 - 5. Elections
 - 6. Treasurer's Report and Finance
 - 7. Equalization of Travel Expenses
 - 8. Additional committees, if needed
- V. Presentation of the official reports and other documents and their reference to committees.
- VI. Statement of the representative of the General Council
- VII. Reports of Officers
 - 1. President
 - 2. Secretary, including a review of the minutes of the Synod and the necrology
 - 3. Treasurer and Auditing Committee
- VIII. Report of the Synodical Council
- IX. Reports of the standing committees
 - 1. Church and Ministry
 - 2. United Promotion
 - 3. National Missions
 - 4. International Missions
 - 5. Christian Education and Publication
 - 6. Business Management
 - 7. Educational Institutions
 - 8. Pensions and Relief
 - 9. Health and Welfare Services
 - 10. Auxiliary Organizations
 - 11. Evangelism
 - 12. Christian Social Action
 - 13. Stewardship
- X. Reports of the conference committees
- XI. Extra-denominational matters
- XII. Elections
- XIII. Miscellaneous reports and other business
- XIV. Adjournment, with the final report on attendance, the reading and adoption of the minutes, and religious services.

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

- 56 a. A Committee on Nominations shall be appointed by the Synodical Council not less than ten days before the spring meeting of the Synod. It shall nominate not more than two candidates for each office, except as otherwise provided.
- b. Additional nominations may be made from the floor of the Synod.
- c. Delegates and alternates from the Synod to the General Synod shall be nominated and elected by ballot, preferably from the membership of the Synod. In case any elected delegate cannot attend the meeting of the General Synod, the first alternate shall take his place; in case any other delegate cannot attend, the second alternate shall take his place. The Secretary of the Synod shall record the delegates and alternates in the proper order of their election.
- d. All elections shall be by ballot and a majority vote shall be necessary to elect. The ballot may be limited by any procedure adopted by the Synod, provided the method adopted does not conflict with the specific constitutional requirements for the election of delegates to the General Synod.
- e. The official credentials of delegates and alternates from the Synod to the General Synod shall be sent to the Secretary of the Church immediately following the meeting at which the elections are held. The official credentials shall be signed by the President of the Synod and countersigned by the Secretary.

EXPENSES

- 57 a. The expenses of the Synod, except for travel and entertainment, shall be borne by the Synod.
- b. All travel expenses shall be equalized and prorated as determined by the Synod.

Officers and Administration

- 58 a. The President, Vice-President and Secretary of a Synod shall be ministers. The Treasurer may be a lay member. A Synod may, at its own option, elect a President on full time.
- b. A part-time President of a Synod shall have been a member of the Synod for not less than three years immediately prior to his election, and a minister of the Church for not less than five years. He shall be elected for a term of two years, and after two full terms of office shall not be eligible to succeed himself.
- c. A Synod President on full time shall have been a minister of the Church for not less than ten years. He need not be a member of the Synod at the time of his election, but shall become a member thereof upon taking office. He shall be elected for a term of four years, and shall be eligible to succeed himself.

d. All other officers of the Synod shall be elected for a term of two years. The Vice-President, after two full terms of office, shall not be eligible to succeed himself.

e. All vacancies shall be filled by the Synodical Council except as otherwise provided.

PRESIDENT OF THE SYNOD

59 a. The President of the Synod shall be the official representative of the Synod.

b. He shall be the chairman of the Synodical Council, and shall conduct the official correspondence of the Synod.

c. He shall make an annual report to the spring meeting of the Synod.

d. He shall transmit to the Synod such information regarding Church affairs as is requested by the Officers and Boards of the Church, and, with the Synodical Council, shall allot sufficient time in the schedule of the meeting of the Synod for the discussion of the program of the Church.

e. He shall appoint all committees necessary, unless otherwise provided in this constitution or by-laws, or by specific resolution of the Synod.

f. He shall have the power to draw warrants upon the Treasurer of the Synod for all legitimate expenses of the Synod or any person or committee acting upon his order or the order of the Synod, and without such warrant no money shall be paid out of the synodical treasury.

g. He shall be responsible for the ordination of all candidates for the ministry who have been properly approved, and, together with the President of the Church, shall sign all certificates of ordination.

h. He shall arrange for the installation of those who have been elected as pastors of churches of the Synod.

i. He shall issue, with the approval of the Synodical Council, a certificate of transfer to any pastor leaving the Synod.

j. He shall keep a complete record of the ministers of the Synod, their ordination, reception, transfer, and other related items, and shall transmit such information to the Secretary of the Church.

k. He shall keep a complete record of the congregations of the Synod, showing the names and addresses of the ministers and officers of the congregations, and shall transmit such information to the Secretary of the Church.

l. He shall deliver the records of ministers and congregations of the Synod to his successor in office.

m. He shall have the right to send communications to any pastor within the Synod.

n. He shall have the right to send communications, through the Consistory or Church Council, to any congregation of the Synod, and to address any congregation of the Synod.

o. He shall confer with the Committee on Church and Ministry in any charge having unusual problems. He shall visit such charge and shall meet with any or all of the following as he may deem necessary: pastor, Committee on Church and Ministry, Consistory or Church Council, Joint Consistory or Joint Church Council, or entire congregation(s). He shall have the power to convene any of the aforementioned bodies, and shall then do whatsoever may be advisable under the circumstances.

p. If full-time President of the Synod, he shall direct, supervise and promote the work of the Church within the Synod, and shall make an annual report to the General Council.

VICE-PRESIDENT

60 a. The Vice-President shall assist the President in administration, and, when requested by the President, shall represent him.

b. Should a vacancy occur in the office of the President of the Synod, the Vice-President shall assume all the rights and duties of the President until the next regular meeting of the Synod, when the Synod shall elect a President for a full term.

SECRETARY

61 The Secretary of the Synod shall also be Secretary of the Synodical Council. He shall keep accurate and permanent record of the minutes of the Synod and of the Synodical Council, and shall assist the President of the Synod as the President shall direct.

TREASURER

62 a. The Treasurer shall receive all monies for the treasury of the Synod, giving his official receipt for the same.

b. He shall administer all funds of the Synod, and pay all bills against warrants properly issued and signed by the President of the Synod.

c. He shall receive an annual salary of at least one dollar (\$1.00).

d. He shall furnish corporate surety bond, as required by the Synodical Council, the premium thereon to be paid by the Synod.

SYNODICAL COUNCIL

63 a. The Synodical Council shall consist of the Officers of the Synod and one or more lay members elected by the Synod for a term of two years. The President of the Synod shall be its chairman.

- b. The Synodical Council shall meet at least semi-annually. Special meetings may be called by the President of the Synod.
- c. The Synodical Council may initiate and bring about a realignment or merger of congregations and charges within its Synod.
- d. It shall prepare the agenda for the meetings of the Synod.

PLACEMENT COMMITTEE

- 64 The Synodical Council shall be the Placement Committee of the Synod. The President of the Church shall be ex officio a member of the Placement Committee.
- 65 a. The chairman of the Placement Committee, with the concurrence of that committee and in consultation with the pastor and Committee on Church and Ministry of the charge involved, shall determine if and when it is advisable to effect a pastoral change.
- b. Whenever a change of pastor seems advisable for the welfare of the congregation or of the pastor, or in the interest of the Church at large, the Placement Committee shall effect the change, but only after due conference with both parties and with the approval of either or both. The change in pastorate shall be effected as rapidly as circumstances and Christian concern make possible.
- 66 It shall be the responsibility of the Placement Committee to see to it that each charge within the boundaries of the Synod is supplied with a minister suitable to the charge, and that each minister is placed in a charge in which his capacity and experience can best be put to the service of the Master.
- 67 a. When a pastor desires a change of pastorate he shall so advise the chairman of the Placement Committee, who shall present this information to chairmen of Placement Committees of other Synods.
- b. If the charge desires a change of pastor, the Consistory or Church Council, or the Joint Consistory or Joint Church Council, shall send a written request, with a statement of reasons for the same, to the chairman of the Placement Committee.
- c. In the case of the death of a pastor or the retirement of a pastor from the service of a charge, the Secretary of the Consistory or Church Council, or of the Joint Consistory or Joint Church Council, of the charge shall report the fact in writing to the President of the Synod.
- d. When a resignation has been duly accepted, the Synod or the Synodical Council shall dissolve the pastoral relationship and declare the pulpit vacant.
- 68 When a charge is without a pastor, the Placement Committee of the Synod shall consult with the Consistory or Church Council, or the

Joint Consistory or Joint Church Council, and assist them to fill the vacancy and to make provision for the temporary supply of the pulpit. This consultation shall be held within a month after the pulpit has been declared vacant. The vacancy shall be filled permanently as quickly as possible, and temporary supply shall not continue for more than one year.

69 a. The chairman of the Placement Committee of the Synod, with the concurrence of that committee and after consultation with the Committee on Church and Ministry of the charge, shall present to the Committee on Church and Ministry of the charge a list of not more than five possible candidates at any one time. The Committee on Church and Ministry of the charge shall then recommend one candidate approved by the Placement Committee to the charge for election.

b. The charge shall consider only one candidate at a time and vote by ballot for or against his election. If the charge consists of more than one congregation, each of the congregations shall vote separately and seal its ballots. Then the Joint Consistory or Joint Church Council shall meet, combine the ballots, and count them as a unit. If the candidate is elected, the Consistory or Church Council, or the Joint Consistory or Joint Church Council, shall then tender him a call, according to the form prescribed by the General Synod.

c. The call must be confirmed by the Synod or the Synodical Council.

70 a. In dealing with special situations in which the exercise of creative initiative by the Placement Committee is needed, the following procedure may be used, provided that all the parties concerned give their consent:

(1) Not less than three months before the annual meeting of the Synod, the charge, or the pastor, or the charge and the pastor together, shall inform the chairman of the Placement Committee that a change in pastorate is desired.

(2) Within thirty days following the annual meeting of the Synod the Placement Committee shall effect the desired change according to its best judgment.

b. If a vacancy occurs at another time of the year, the foregoing procedure may be applied, in principle, to permit the Placement Committee to fill said vacancy within four months after its occurrence.

c. If after two years either the charge or the pastor is not satisfied, this procedure may again be instituted.

71 The Placement Committee of a Synod may confer with the Placement Committees of other Synods in order to effect pastoral changes.

COMMITTEE ON CHURCH AND MINISTRY

- 72 a. This committee shall consist of the President of the Synod and not less than three ministers and one lay member who shall be elected by the Synod for a term of three years.
- b. It shall be the duty of the Committee on Church and Ministry to pass upon the physical, mental and spiritual fitness of those desiring to become candidates for ordination or for the Privilege of Call. It shall also supervise the work of students for the ministry who have registered in the Synod. It shall report to the Synod.
- c. This committee shall be related to the Commission on Church and Ministry of the General Synod and to the Committees on Church and Ministry of local charges.

COMMITTEE ON UNITED PROMOTION

- 73 a. This committee shall consist of not less than two ministers and one lay member. They shall be elected by the Synod for a term of three years, the term of one-third of their number expiring each year.
- b. It shall be the duty of this committee to cooperate with the Committee on Correlation and Promotion of the General Council and with the congregations of the Synod in promoting the missionary and benevolent work of the Church.

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEES

- 74 a. There shall be, in addition, such other committees as are indicated in By-Law 55-IX.
- b. Each of these committees shall consist of not less than two ministers and one lay member. They shall be elected by the Synod for a term of three years, the term of one-third of their number expiring each year.

Special Synods

HUNGARIAN SYNOD

- 75 Hungarian congregations may constitute a Hungarian Synod.

MISSION SYNOD

- 76 A Mission Synod, unless otherwise provided for, shall have the same rights and duties as a regular Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

The General Synod

Meetings

GENERAL PROCEDURES

- 77 a. The General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church shall meet in regular session biennially.
- b. The date, place and details of the meetings of the General Synod, unless provided for by the General Synod in previous session, shall be determined by the General Council.
- c. A special meeting of the General Synod may be called by resolution of the General Synod in session, or upon the request of not less than ten Synods, or by the General Council. Only such business shall be transacted as is specified in the call. At least six weeks before the time of a special meeting the Secretary shall issue a call to the members, informing them of the time and place of meeting, and specifying the items of business to be considered.
- d. All meetings of the General Synod shall be public, unless otherwise provided for by the General Synod in session.
- e. Immediately after the formal opening of the first business session of the General Synod, the Committee on Credentials shall report the names of accredited delegates. If a quorum is present, the General Synod is authorized to transact business.
- f. An alternate delegate may not substitute for a regular delegate during the meeting until the General Synod shall have authorized such action.
- g. A delegate may not absent himself from any of the sessions of the General Synod without consent of the General Synod.
- h. All motions and resolutions shall be adopted by a majority vote, except as otherwise provided for in the constitution and by-laws.
- i. The General Synod shall adhere to and shall follow the accepted parliamentary law and rules of order.

PROGRAM AND ORDER OF BUSINESS

- 78 I. Religious Services
- II. Organization
1. Record of attendance
 2. Defining the bar of the house
 3. Announcement of the appointment of the Committee on Credentials, Excuses and Visitors
 4. Report of the Committee on Credentials, Excuses and Visitors
- III. Election of the Moderator and the Vice-Moderator

- IV. Adoption of the program and schedule
- V. Announcement of the appointment of committees:
 - 1. Religious Services
 - 2. Minutes of the General Synod
 - 3. Reports of the President and the Secretary, the General Council and the Trustees, the Department of United Promotion, and Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws
 - 4. Minutes of the Synods
 - 5. Overtures
 - 6. National Missions
 - 7. International Missions
 - 8. Christian Education and Publication
 - 9. Business Management
 - 10. Pensions and Relief
 - 11. Foundation of the Evangelical and Reformed Church
 - 12. Evangelism
 - 13. Christian Social Action
 - 14. Higher Education and Educational Institutions
 - 15. Stewardship
 - 16. World Service
 - 17. Church and Ministry
 - 18. Health and Welfare Services
 - 19. Liturgics
 - 20. Theological Education
 - 21. Historical Society
 - 22. Churchmen's Brotherhood
 - 23. Women's Guild
 - 24. Ecumenical Relations
 - 25. Treasurer's Report and Finance
 - 26. Nominations
 - 27. Elections
 - 28. Correlation of Reports, and Special Resolutions
(Consisting of the chairmen of committees 2-5)
 - 29. Equalization of Travel Expenses
- VI. Presentation of the official reports and other documents and their reference to committees
- VII. Reports of the Officers
 - 1. President
 - 2. Secretary
 - 3. Treasurer
- VIII. Report of the General Council
- IX. Reports of Committees
- X. Report of the Judicial Commission

- XI. Extra-denominational matters
- XII. Elections
- XIII. Miscellaneous reports and other business
- XIV. Adjournment, with the final report on attendance, the reading and adoption of the minutes, and religious services.

PRESIDING OFFICERS

- 79 a. A Moderator and Vice-Moderator shall be elected to preside over the meeting of the General Synod. Their duties shall cease at the close of the meeting of the General Synod.
- b. Immediately after the Moderator accepts his position, the General Synod shall elect a Vice-Moderator, who shall represent the Moderator upon his request, or during his temporary absence.
- c. The election of these presiding officers shall be the second order of business on the agenda of the General Synod.
- d. Nominations for Moderator and Vice-Moderator shall be submitted by the Nominating Committee. Additional nominations may be made from the floor of the General Synod.
- e. The Officers of the Church are eligible for election to the offices of Moderator and Vice-Moderator.

NOMINATIONS

- 80 a. Each Synodical Council during the year preceding the year of the meeting of the General Synod shall appoint to the membership of the Committee on Nominations one minister or one lay member from the delegates elected by the Synod, according to a schedule to be determined by the General Council. The President of the Church shall appoint one additional member who shall serve as the chairman of the committee.
- b. Not later than thirty days before the meeting of the General Synod the members of the Committee on Nominations shall receive from the Secretary of the Church a list of the offices to be filled at the ensuing meeting of the General Synod.
- c. Notice of the time and place of the meeting of the Committee on Nominations shall be sent by the Secretary of the Church to Synods, Boards, Commissions, and Auxiliary Organizations at least thirty days prior to the date of the meeting.
- d. Synods, when submitting to the Secretary of the Church the credentials of their respective delegates and alternates to the General Synod, shall send with those credentials full information concerning the qualifications of each delegate or alternate for election to office by the General Synod, and the Secretary shall forward such information to the chairman of the Committee on Nominations.

e. When selecting candidates for office, the Committee on Nominations shall consider suggestions from Synods, Boards, Commissions and Auxiliary Organizations. In addition, the members of the Committee on Nominations shall seek out on their own and recommend for nomination persons in the Synods they represent whom they deem capable to serve in specified positions.

f. The Committee on Nominations shall nominate not more than two persons for each office. Additional nominations may be made from the floor of the General Synod.

g. A statement shall be prepared by the Committee on Nominations setting forth the qualifications of every candidate presented. This requirement shall apply also to nominations made from the floor.

h. The Committee on Nominations shall elect from its number a Standing Committee of seven to serve during the biennium. This Standing Committee shall make recommendations for filling vacancies that may occur during the biennium. The functions of the Standing Committee shall terminate on the eve of the next General Synod.

ELECTIONS

81 a. All elections shall be by ballot, and a majority vote shall be necessary to elect.

b. Members elected to office by the General Synod, together with members of Boards, Commissions and Boards of Auxiliary Organizations so elected, shall, unless otherwise provided, assume office on February 1 following their election. This by-law, however, shall not be applicable to persons elected at the 1953 meeting of the General Synod. They shall assume office on September 1, 1953.

c. The Officers of the Church shall be elected not later than the third full-day session of the General Synod. Other elections shall not be held until the Officers of the Church have been duly elected.

d. The editors of the Church papers shall be elected for a term of six years, and shall be eligible for reelection. Should a vacancy occur, the General Council at its next meeting shall fill the vacancy until the next meeting of the General Synod.

EXPENSES

82 a. The expenses of the meetings of the General Synod, except the travel and entertainment expenses, shall be borne by the General Synod.

b. The expenses of all delegates at large shall be borne by the respective Boards or agencies which they represent.

c. The travel and entertainment expenses of all delegates shall be borne by the Synods. The travel expenses of the delegates, both min-

isterial and lay, shall be equalized and prorated by the Committee on Equalization of Travel Expenses. Prior to the meeting of the General Synod a deposit sufficient to meet this outlay shall be made by the Treasurers of the Synods.

FORMS

- 83 a. The General Synod shall prepare the following forms: formula of licensure, temporary licensure, call to a minister, certificate of ordination, transfer of a minister, reception of a transferred minister, organization of a congregation, constitution of a congregation, certificates of marriage, baptism, confirmation, transfer of a member, reception of a transferred member, statistical report of a pastoral charge, statistical report of a Synod, credential of a lay delegate to a Synod, credential of a delegate from a Synod to the General Synod and credential of an alternate from a Synod to the General Synod.
- b. These forms may be changed or amended at any stated meeting of the General Synod by a two-thirds vote.

Fiscal Year

- 84 The fiscal year of the General Synod shall close on January 31 of each calendar year.

Officers of the Church

QUALIFICATIONS

- 85 a. The candidates for the offices of President, First Vice-President and Secretary of the Church shall be ministers who have been ministers of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, or of one of the two Churches united into the Evangelical and Reformed Church, for not less than fifteen years.
- b. The candidates for the offices of Synod Vice-President and Treasurer of the Church shall be lay members who have been members of an Evangelical and Reformed congregation, or of a congregation of either of the two Churches united into the Evangelical and Reformed Church, for not less than fifteen years.

PRESIDENT

- 86 a. The President of the Church shall give himself wholly to the duties of his office. He shall be elected for a term of six years and shall be eligible for reelection.
- b. In case of death or withdrawal of the President of the Church, the First Vice-President shall fill the office of the President until the next meeting of the General Synod, when the General Synod shall elect a President for a full term.

Duties

- 87 a. The President shall give care and stimulus to the spiritual life of the Church. As the official representative of the Church he shall be an advisory member of all Boards, Auxiliary Organizations, Committees and Commissions.
- b. He shall act as representative of the Church in any interdenominational or international group where, in the judgment of the General Council, a representative of the Church should appear. He may appoint, with the approval of the General Council, a special representative of the Church for such occasions as he deems advisable.
- c. He shall be the chairman of the General Council and of its Administrative Committee.
- d. He shall hold the seal of the Church and affix his signature to all official documents of the Church.
- e. He shall sign all certificates of ordination and Privilege of Call.
- f. He shall render a complete report of his work to the General Synod in session and to the General Council in the intervening years.
- g. He shall send the official statements of the Officers of the Church, of the General Council, and of the Boards to the members of the Synods not later than thirty days before the opening of the sessions of the spring meeting of each Synod.
- h. He or his appointee (preferably a member of the General Council, or the Administrative Assistant) shall attend the spring meetings of the Synods and give information regarding the program of the Church.
- i. He shall have authority to instruct the Synodical Council of a Synod to place certain matters pertaining to the work of the Church upon the program of the sessions of the fall meeting of the Synod and to give these matters preference.
- j. He shall have power to address any legitimate communication, either personally or by official representative, or by written message, to any congregation or Synod.
- k. He shall appoint all committees authorized by the General Synod or the General Council except where other provisions are made in the constitution or by-laws, or where other methods of selection are stated in resolutions. He shall authorize the Treasurer to pay their legitimate expenses.
- l. He shall enforce the constitution and by-laws of the Church and the rules and regulations of the General Synod.

FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

- 88 a. The First Vice-President shall be elected for a term of six years and shall be eligible for reelection. He shall take over the powers and

duties of the President of the Church in the event of his death, resignation or removal or other causes making him unable to perform his duties, either temporarily or otherwise, until the next meeting of the General Synod.

b. He shall assist the President by his counsel and in any other way the President may call upon him. He shall represent the President, when requested to do so, at Synod meetings, Board meetings or other conferences or conventions, and as the representative of the President shall carry out his instructions.

c. He shall be a member of the General Council and of its Administrative Committee, and shall be the chairman of its Committee on Correlation and Promotion.

d. He, or his designee, shall be the chairman of the Cabinet on Correlation and Promotion.

e. Should a vacancy occur in the office of First Vice-President, the General Council at its next session shall elect a First Vice-President, who shall serve until the next meeting of the General Synod.

SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT

89 a. The Second Vice-President shall be elected for a term of six years and shall be eligible for reelection. He shall assist the President by his counsel and otherwise. He shall represent the President, when requested by him to do so, at Synod or Board meetings, or other conferences or conventions, and as the representative of the President shall carry out his instructions.

b. He shall be a member of the General Council and of its Administrative Committee, and shall be chairman of its Finance and Budget Committee.

c. Should a vacancy occur in the office of Second Vice-President, the General Council at its next session shall elect a Second Vice-President, who shall serve until the next meeting of the General Synod.

SECRETARY

90 a. The Secretary of the Church shall give his whole time to the duties of his office. He shall be elected for a term of six years and shall be eligible for reelection.

b. Should a vacancy occur in the office of Secretary, the General Council at its next session shall elect a Secretary, who shall serve until the next meeting of the General Synod.

Duties

91 a. The Secretary shall record the minutes of the meetings of the General Synod and shall have them printed after they are approved by the Moderator and the President of the Church.

b. He may appoint recording and corresponding assistants for the meetings of the General Synod, subject to the approval of the President of the Church.

c. At least forty days before any meeting of the General Synod he shall furnish the Secretaries of the Synods the official credential blanks for delegates and alternates to the General Synod.

d. He shall be the secretary of the General Council, of its Administrative Committee, and of its Committee on Correlation and Promotion.

e. He shall countersign certificates and documents of the Church, and any other official documents authorized by the General Synod or the General Council.

f. He shall keep an accurate record of the ministers of the Church, their addresses, ordinations, installations, transfers, dismissals, depositions and deaths.

g. He shall keep an accurate record of the congregations of the Church, and of their statistics.

h. He shall be the official custodian of all records and documents of the Church.

i. He shall carefully preserve the original records of all proceedings of the General Synod and of the General Council, and all documents, letters and papers having reference to their proceedings, and shall deposit them in such places as the General Synod or the General Council shall direct. Such documents shall not be removed except by action of the General Synod or the General Council.

j. He shall be the editor of the Year Book of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

k. The Secretary shall assist the President of the Church by counsel and otherwise. He shall represent the President when requested by him to do so, and as the representative of the President shall carry out his instructions.

TREASURER

92 a. The Treasurer of the Church shall give his whole time to the duties of his office. He shall be elected for a term of six years and shall be eligible for reelection.

b. Should a vacancy occur in the office of Treasurer, the General Council at its next session shall elect a Treasurer, who shall serve until the next meeting of the General Synod.

Duties

93 a. The Treasurer shall be a member of the General Council, of its Administrative Committee and of its Finance and Budget Committee.

b. He shall receive all monies for the Church or its work, giving official receipt for the same. He shall deposit all monies which have been received by him in such bank or banks as the General Council may designate.

c. On the last day of the month he shall pay to the Boards all monies received for their work, according to instructions given him by the General Synod or by the General Council.

d. In case of emergency, when the receipts are temporarily insufficient, he shall borrow such sums as the General Council may direct.

e. Upon authorization of the President, he shall pay all bills chargeable to the treasury of the General Synod.

f. He shall keep all his accounts for the entire Church according to a unified system of bookkeeping, as the General Council shall direct.

g. He shall submit monthly reports to the Finance and Budget Committee of the General Council, and shall submit a complete report at every meeting of the General Council. Through the President of the Church, he shall submit an annual statement of all accounts to the Synods. He shall make a complete report to every meeting of the General Synod.

h. He shall not dispose of any money without proper authorization. He shall not make investments without the authority of the General Council upon recommendation of its Finance and Budget Committee.

i. He shall furnish corporate surety bonds in the sums decided by the General Council, which shall arrange for the payment of the premiums.

The General Council

Membership

- 94 The General Council shall include the following Officers of the Church: the President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. In addition, eight pastors and eight lay members, representing sixteen different Synods, shall be elected by the General Synod for a term of six years. They shall be eligible for only one additional term. One-half of their number shall be elected at each regular meeting of the General Synod. Any vacancy occurring in the General Council, unless otherwise provided for, shall be filled by the General Council.

Meetings

- 95 The General Council shall meet semi-annually, and may hold additional meetings at the call of its chairman.

Duties

96 The General Council shall:

- a. Supervise and direct the work of the Church and act for the Church when the General Synod is not in session, except in such matters as are reserved in the constitution or by-laws.
- b. Serve as the trustees of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.
- c. Direct the financial policy of the Church and be empowered to authorize the Treasurer to borrow money to meet any deficiencies.
- d. Appoint for the conduct of its work the following committees: Administrative, Finance and Budget, Correlation and Promotion, and Publication.
- e. Determine the salaries of the President, the First Vice-President, the Secretary and the Treasurer of the Church. It shall review such salaries annually and may revise them.
- f. Appoint an Administrative Assistant to the President of the Church and fix his salary.
- g. Through the Committee on Correlation and Promotion, supervise all general promotion of the Church and establish such policies as are deemed necessary to bring about a coordinated and correlated program for the entire Church.
- h. Establish a Department of Correlation headed by the Administrative Assistant to the President of the Church.
- i. Appoint a Director of United Promotion and fix his salary, establish a Department of United Promotion, and select the personnel thereof, fix their salaries, and assign their respective duties.
- j. Formulate, at its annual meeting, the program of the Church. To this meeting it shall invite the editors of the Church papers and representatives of the Boards, Commissions, Auxiliary Organizations and other agencies as advisory members, and shall give them opportunity to present their work.
- k. Appoint a Board of Directors for the Foundation of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.
- l. Appoint a Committee on Liturgics.
- m. Appoint the members of the Committee on Theological Education as specified in the By-Laws pertaining to the Committee.
- n. Approve all elections of members made by Boards, Commissions, and Auxiliary Organizations of the Church.
- o. Approve the appointments and salaries of executives and staff members of Departments, Boards, Commissions and Auxiliary Organizations before agreements are made concerning such appointments and salaries. It shall review such salaries annually and may make recommendation for salary revisions.

p. Be empowered to approve the granting of temporary license to applicants who have not been under the care of the Synod while studying for the ministry, conditional upon their examination and approval by the Committee on Church and Ministry of the Synod.

q. Assign to Synods for service therein the candidates for ordination referred to it by the Synods which approved them. In each instance it shall take into consideration the needs of the referring Synod, the needs of the Church, and the qualifications and preferences of the candidate.

r. Be empowered to grant the Privilege of Call for a period of one year to ministers from other denominations, conditioned upon their examination and approval by the Committee on Church and Ministry of the Synod. With the approval of the Synod it may renew such Privilege of Call.

s. Be empowered to approve the transfer of congregations from one Synod to another upon mutual agreement of the congregations and Synods involved.

t. Prepare the agenda for all meetings of the General Synod and appoint the committees necessary for such meetings, unless otherwise provided for.

u. Submit to the General Synod, for adoption, the Budget of the Church for the coming biennium, as prepared by the Finance and Budget Committee and approved by the General Council.

Committees and Departments

97 a. The Administrative Committee shall consist of seven members of the General Council.

b. It shall perform the duties of the General Council ad interim. It shall meet quarterly, and may hold additional meetings at the call of its chairman.

98 a. The Finance and Budget Committee shall plan the annual budget of the Church and shall submit the same to the General Council for approval.

b. In advance of each meeting of the General Synod it shall prepare the Budget of the Church for a two-year period and shall submit said Budget to the General Council for approval and reference to the General Synod.

c. It shall supervise the work of the Treasurer and shall be responsible for the audit of the accounts of the Treasurer and those of all Boards, Commissions, Agencies and Auxiliary Organizations of the Church.

d. It shall provide for fidelity bond coverage for all treasurers.

- 99 The Committee on Correlation and Promotion shall consist of seven members of the General Council. In addition to performing the duties prescribed in By-Law 96-g, it shall function in the Synods through their respective Committees on United Promotion.
- 100 a. The Committee on Publication shall consist of five members of the General Council.
- b. It shall determine the editorial policy of the Church papers, supervise the work of the editors, and fix their salaries.
- c. It shall cause to be published books or pamphlets which interpret the doctrinal position or the polity of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, as directed by the General Synod or the General Council.
101. a. The Department of Correlation shall be headed by the Administrative Assistant to the President.
- b. It shall be responsible for the following: liaison duties (inter-Board contact and expression), correlation of agency function so as to avoid overlappings and omissions in the performance of such functions, correlation of material to pastors, seasonal denomination-wide emphases, and yearly emphasis.
- 102 The Department of United Promotion shall be responsible for the following: promotion of the apportionment and Kingdom Service giving, direction of field work, promotional literature, audio-visual aids, radio and television, the weekly parish bulletin, and special fund-raising.

Administrative Boards, Commissions, Committees and Auxiliary Organizations

GENERAL PROCEDURES

- 103 The General Synod shall diligently conduct its Kingdom Work through Boards, Commissions, Committees and Auxiliary Organizations.

Membership

- 104 a. Each Board and Commission shall be composed of ministers and lay members.
- b. Officers of the Church and members of the General Council shall not be eligible as members of Boards, Commissions or Boards of Auxiliary Organizations.
- c. A person shall not be a member of more than one Board or Commission or Board of an Auxiliary Organization.
- d. Members of Boards and Commissions and Boards of Auxiliary Organizations shall be elected by the General Synod except as otherwise provided. They shall serve for six years and be eligible for re-

election, but shall not serve for more than two successive terms of six years each. One-half of the number to be elected by the General Synod shall be elected at each meeting of the General Synod. All vacancies shall be filled by the Board, Commission or Auxiliary Organization concerned, subject to the approval of the General Council.

Duties

105 a. Each Board, Commission and Auxiliary Organization shall make a biennial report to the General Synod and an annual statement to the Synods, which statement shall be submitted to the President of the Church not later than March 1 of each year.

b. Each Board, Commission and Auxiliary Organization shall present its financial needs, together with its budget of estimated income and estimated expenditures and a statement of its financial operations during the past year, to the General Council at least two weeks prior to the annual meeting of the General Council and furnish such information and reports as the General Council may require. Each Board, Commission and Auxiliary Organization may be represented at the meetings of the General Council.

c. The financial accounts of each Board, Commission and Auxiliary Organization shall be audited annually by a certified public accountant approved by the General Council, and the report of such auditor shall be a part of the annual report of the Board, Commission or Auxiliary Organization to the General Council.

d. A Board, Commission or Auxiliary Organization shall not inaugurate a campaign for the raising of funds apart from its regular budget without the consent of the General Council.

e. A Board shall have no right to borrow more than \$5,000.00 at one time, nor more than \$10,000.00 in any one year, without the consent of the General Council.

f. The fiscal year of all Boards, Commissions and Auxiliary Organizations receiving apportionments from the General Synod shall close on the thirty-first day of January of each calendar year.

g. A Board or Commission shall elect such executive secretaries, editors or managers as may be necessary, subject to the approval of the General Council.

h. Each Board and Commission and Auxiliary Organization shall effect its own organization for the conduct of its work.

i. A Board may be incorporated by action of the General Synod

BOARDS OF THE GENERAL SYNOD

106 The Boards of the General Synod shall be: National Missions, International Missions, Christian Education and Publication, Business Management, Pensions and Relief, and the Foundation.

BOARD OF NATIONAL MISSIONS

Membership

- 107 The Board of National Missions shall consist of fourteen members, of whom at least eight shall be ministers and at least two shall be women. The General Synod shall elect ten and these ten shall elect the other four, subject to the approval of the General Council.

Duties

- 108 a. The Board of National Missions shall promote and administer the missionary work of the Church in the home land. It shall determine the home mission policy of the Church.
- b. It is empowered to recommend to Placement Committees of Synods the removal for cause of the pastor of a mission church, after consultation with the congregation and the pastor, when such removal is deemed necessary for the good of the mission church and the denomination.
- c. It shall divide itself into the following departments: General Missionary Expansion, Special Missionary Projects, and Church Building.
- d. It shall be responsible for church extension, church building, special projects, rural churches (including union churches), urban strategy (survey and research), architecture and planning.
- e. It shall have two separate treasuries and treasurers, one for Missions and one for Church Building, and shall not divert money from one treasury to the other.

BOARD OF INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS

Membership

- 109 The Board of International Missions shall consist of twelve members, of whom at least seven shall be ministers, and at least one shall be a woman. The General Synod shall elect ten and these ten shall elect the other two, subject to the approval of the General Council.

Duties

- 110 The Board of International Missions shall promote and administer the missionary work of the Church beyond the bounds of the United States and Canada. It shall determine the international missionary policy of the Church.

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND PUBLICATION

Membership

- 111 The Board of Christian Education and Publication shall consist of twelve members, at least six of whom shall be ministers and two

of whom shall be women. The General Synod shall elect eight, including one woman, and these shall elect the remaining four, subject to the approval of the General Council.

Duties

112 a. The Board of Christian Education and Publication shall develop, promote and direct a comprehensive and unified program of Christian education in accord with the doctrinal position and polity of the Evangelical and Reformed Church as determined by the General Synod. It shall assist congregations in making that program a vital part of congregational life and work.

b. It shall establish and direct a program of leadership training.

c. It shall develop and direct an educational and editorial policy, and publish such religious educational texts, church school hymnals, periodicals and other materials as may serve the best interests of the membership of the Church, assuming responsibility, financial and otherwise, for such publications.

BOARD OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Membership

113 The Board of Business Management shall consist of twelve members, of whom three shall be residents of Missouri and three shall be residents of Pennsylvania. Six of their number shall be ministers. The General Synod shall elect eight members and these shall elect the other four, subject to the approval of the General Council.

Duties

114 a. The Board of Business Management shall conduct the office buildings, the commercial printing, publishing and bookbinding plants, the church supply houses and the general bookstores of the Church.

b. It shall print all periodicals and books authorized by the General Synod. The printing of other periodicals and books shall be approved by the Committee on Publication of the General Council.

c. It shall promote the sale of religious literature and other reading material, and concern itself with the promotion of the publishing interests of the Church, except as otherwise provided.

d. It shall outline the program and determine the policies of its business for the ensuing year, subject to the approval of the General Council.

BOARD OF PENSIONS AND RELIEF

Membership

115 The Board of Pensions and Relief shall consist of fourteen members, at least six of whom shall be ministers. Eight of the members

of the Board shall be elected by the General Synod and these shall elect the other six, subject to the approval of the General Council.

Duties

- 116 The Board of Pensions and Relief shall receive, hold, and disburse such property, personal, real, and mixed, as may be given to it and it may acquire, for the adequate pension, relief and support of disabled and aged ministers, ministers' widows, and ministers' orphans under eighteen years of age.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED CHURCH

Duties

- 117 a. The Foundation of the Evangelical and Reformed Church shall serve as a Board of Investments to invest such funds as may be entrusted to its care by the various Boards and institutions of the Church. It shall be controlled in its investments by the policies determined by the General Council.

b. The Foundation shall be responsible for:

- (1) promoting, stimulating, soliciting and encouraging special gifts;
- (2) receiving and managing the funds;
- (3) functioning as the gift and endowment agency of the Church; and
- (4) distributing the income from these funds in accordance with the wishes of the donors.

Board of Directors

- 118 The Foundation of the Evangelical and Reformed Church shall be directed by a Board composed of two ministers and five laymen appointed by the General Council, and including persons of special competence in the fields of banking and investment and in the promotion of Christian stewardship.

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARIES

- 119 The theological seminaries shall be controlled, managed and operated as provided in their charters, but in conformity with section 105 of these by-laws.

- 120 a. The number of members of the respective Boards of the Theological Seminary at Lancaster, Pa., of Eden Seminary at Webster Groves, Mo., and of Mission House Seminary at Plymouth, Wis., shall be determined by their respective charters. Two-thirds of the members of each Board shall be elected by the General Synod and the remainder by the Board, subject to the approval of the General Council. In the

election of these members the sections of the Church in which the theological seminaries are located and the provisions of their respective charters shall be taken into account.

b. Members of the Boards of theological seminaries shall be elected to serve for a term of six years and shall be eligible for reelection. One-half of the number to be elected by the General Synod shall be elected at each meeting of the General Synod.

c. All vacancies on the Boards of the theological seminaries shall be filled by the Boards concerned, subject to the approval of the General Council.

121 a. Theological seminaries shall receive such financial support and assistance as the General Synod may appropriate and apportion.

b. Each theological seminary shall render a biennial statement, including a financial statement, to the General Synod. The financial statement shall be audited annually by a certified public accountant approved by the General Council, and the certificate of such auditor shall accompany such annual statement; provided, however, in the event that the treasurer of any theological seminary is a financial institution, bank or trust company having fiduciary powers under the laws of the state in which it is located, the certificate of such treasurer as to the correctness of the annual statement shall be accepted in lieu of the certificate of a certified public accountant.

COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES OF THE GENERAL SYNOD

122 a. The Commissions of the General Synod shall be: Evangelism, Christian Social Action, Higher Education, Stewardship, World Service, Church and Ministry, Health and Welfare Services, and the Judicial Commission.

b. The Committees of the General Synod shall be the Committee on Liturgics and the Committee on Theological Education.

COMMISSION ON EVANGELISM

Membership

123 The Commission on Evangelism shall consist of ten members, of whom five shall be ministers and five shall be lay members. The General Synod shall elect six members and they shall elect the other four, subject to the approval of the General Council.

Duties

124 This Commission shall promote evangelism and the spiritual life and work of the Church. It shall plan a program of evangelism for the whole Church, and shall assist in making every congregation a more effective evangelistic force. It shall cooperate with other agencies in the Church in enriching special seasons of the year with spiritual life and power.

COMMISSION ON CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ACTION

Membership

- 125 The Commission on Christian Social Action shall consist of twelve members, at least five of whom shall be pastors. The General Synod shall elect eight members and they shall elect the other four, subject to the approval of the General Council.

Duties

- 126 It shall be the duty of this Commission to study the content of the gospel in its bearing on the individual and on society, to recommend a program of Christian social action for the Church, to provide and publish information and literature on social issues, to cooperate with other agencies in making the implications of the gospel effective in society, and to formulate and promote a social program for the Church.

COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Membership

- 127 The Commission on Higher Education shall consist of six ministers and six lay persons chosen by the General Synod. In addition to the aforesaid the executive secretary of the Board of Christian Education and the heads of the educational institutions of the Church shall be members of this Commission.

Duties

- 128 The function of this Commission shall be to study and determine the Church's program of higher education, to cultivate closer relationship between the educational institutions themselves and the Church, and to maintain and develop the principles and ideals of the Christian religion in the educational institutions of the Church.

Expenses

- 129 The expenses of the representatives of the educational institutions shall be borne by their institutions.

COMMISSION ON STEWARDSHIP

Membership

- 130 The Commission on Stewardship shall consist of twelve members, at least three of whom shall be pastors. The Women's Guild, the Churchmen's Brotherhood, the Department of United Promotion, the Board of Christian Education and Publication, and the Youth Fellowship shall each choose one member and the General Synod shall elect five members. These ten shall elect the other two, subject to the approval of the General Council.

Duty

- 131 It shall be the duty of the Commission to advocate the principles and practice of Christian Stewardship throughout the Church.

COMMISSION ON WORLD SERVICE

Membership

- 132 The Commission on World Service shall consist of ten members, six of whom shall be ministers and four of whom shall be lay members. The General Synod shall elect four ministers and two lay members, and they shall elect the other members, subject to the approval of the General Council. The membership may appoint advisory members as the need arises.

Duties

- 133 It shall be the duty of the Commission to render ministries of mercy in areas of need. Its responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to, inter-Church aid, defense services and disaster relief.

COMMISSION ON CHURCH AND MINISTRY

Membership

- 134 The Commission on Church and Ministry shall consist of ten members, six of whom shall be ministers and four of whom shall be lay members. The General Synod shall elect four ministers and two lay members, and they shall elect four members, subject to the approval of the General Council.

Duties

- 135 This Commission shall be responsible for the following pastoral relations, life enlistment, student loans, in-service training, religion and health, social and parish workers, correlation of the work of the synodical Committee on Church and Ministry, chaplains.

COMMISSION ON HEALTH AND WELFARE SERVICES

Membership

- 136 The benevolent institutions of the Church shall be related to the Church and to each other through a Commission on Health and Welfare Services. Four members of this Commission shall be elected by the General Synod. These four, together with such representatives as the benevolent institutions may choose, shall constitute the Commission. Only one representative of an institution shall have a vote in the Commission.

The benevolent institutions of the Church shall be those whose charters or constitutions provide that a majority of the members of their governing boards shall be members, in good standing, of congregations of the Evangelical and Reformed Church; and that upon dissolution of the institutions all property, real and personal, shall revert to the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

Benevolent institutions not qualifying as members of the Commission, as hereinabove set forth, may be united with the Commission by associate membership, their representatives having voice but not vote at the meetings of the Commission.

Duties

- 137 This Commission shall be responsible for coordinating the policies and programs of the benevolent institutions of the Church, for representing their interests before the General Synod and the more immediate constituencies they serve, and for cooperating with other agencies operating in the field of social welfare.

New Benevolent Institution

- 138 A church or group of churches wishing to establish a new benevolent institution shall present such request to this Commission, which shall present it to the General Council for approval. To qualify for such approval the institution shall provide in its charter or constitution that a majority of its governing board shall be members, in good standing, of a congregation of the Evangelical and Reformed Church; and that upon dissolution of the institution all property, real and personal, shall revert to the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

Expenses

- 139 The expenses of the representatives of the benevolent institutions shall be borne by their institutions.

COMMITTEE ON LITURGICS

Membership

- 140 The Committee on Liturgics shall consist of seven persons appointed by the General Council to serve for a term of two years.

Duties

- 141 The Committee on Liturgics shall consider such matters in the field of liturgics as are referred to it by the General Synod or the General Council, and shall address itself to other areas of appropriate interest after consultation with the General Council. After such consideration it shall make recommendations to the General Council for submission to the General Synod.

COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Membership

- 142 The Committee on Theological Education shall be appointed by the General Council for a term of two years. It shall consist of the administrative head and a faculty member from each of the theological seminaries of the Church, three pastors, three laymen or laywomen, and the chairman and the executive secretary of the Commission on Church and Ministry.

Duties

- 143 The duties of this Committee shall be to engage in continuing exploration of the purpose and content of theological education in the life of the Church, to interpret to the Church the needs of the seminaries, and to interpret to the seminaries the concerns and the needs of the Church with respect to those who serve it in full-time vocation.

AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS OF THE GENERAL SYNOD

- 144 The Auxiliary Organizations of the General Synod shall be the Churchmen's Brotherhood, the Women's Guild and the Historical Society.

CHURCHMEN'S BROTHERHOOD

- 145 a. The Churchmen's Brotherhood shall be the officially recognized organization for men. Its purpose shall be to develop and coordinate in our churches, through study, prayer, fellowship and service, the man power of the Church for the cultivation of the Christian life and for the success of the whole program of the Church.

b. It shall be administered by a Board of Directors consisting of eleven members, three pastors and eight laymen, elected as follows: two pastors and two laymen elected by the General Synod, one of each elected at each meeting; five laymen elected by the National Convention of the Brotherhood; one pastor and one layman from the Church at large, elected by the other nine members of the Board, subject to the approval of the General Council.

WOMEN'S GUILD

- 146 a. The Women's Guild shall be the officially recognized organization for women. Its purpose shall be to formulate an all-inclusive program of education and service for the women's organizations of the Church. It shall have power to initiate plans for their promotional work and to attend to such other administrative duties as usually devolve upon such an organization.

b. It shall be administered by a Board of women, two of whom shall be elected by the General Synod for a term of six years. The

other members of the Board shall be elected by the Women's Guild. Their number, the manner of their election and the term of their office shall be determined by the Women's Guild as set forth in its constitution and by-laws.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Purpose

- 147 The Historical Society shall be the officially recognized historical agency of the Church. It shall be the official custodian of the historical records of the Church.

Executive Committee

- 148 The Historical Society shall be administered by an Executive Committee composed of the officers of the Society and four members elected by the General Synod.

Duties of the Executive Committee

- 149 The duties of the Executive Committee shall be as set forth in the constitution and by-laws of the Historical Society as approved by the General Synod.

Supplemental Administrative-Promotional Agencies

THE AREA PLAN

THE AREA

- 150 An Area shall consist of a group of contiguous Synods in a territory prescribed by the General Synod.

THE AREA COUNCIL

- 151 a. The Area Council shall consist of the Area President, the Presidents of the Synods of the Area, the chairmen of the National Missions Committees of the Synods of the Area, and one lay person from each Synod, elected by the respective Synods of the Area.
- b. The Area President shall be the chairman of the Area Council. The Area Council shall elect its own Secretary and Treasurer.
- c. In case of a vacancy in the office of Area President, the Secretary shall have the power to convene the Area Council until the position of Area President can be filled in accord with By-Law 155.
- d. The Area Council shall direct, supervise and promote the program of the Church in the Area.

THE AREA PRESIDENT

Qualifications

- 152 An Area President shall have been a minister of the Evangelical and Reformed Church for not less than ten years.

Office

- 153 a. An Area President shall give his full time to the duties of his office. He shall be elected for a term of six years and shall be eligible for reelection.
- b. His salary shall be fixed by the General Council, together with an additional amount for house rent, traveling, and office expense.

Duties

- 154 a. The President of the Area shall supervise placement and pastoral relations within the Area. His duties in this connection shall include but not be limited to the following:
- (1) He shall be an ex-officio member of each Placement Committee within the Area.
 - (2) He shall be the official representative to the Committees on Church and Ministry of vacant charges within the Area, and with the advice and consent of the Placement Committees shall make recommendations for filling all pastoral vacancies.
 - (3) He shall review with each Synod President within the Area the reports of the Committees on Church and Ministry of the charges of the Synod.
 - (4) He shall be a pastor to the pastors of the Area.
 - (5) He shall meet with congregations of the Area to give advice and counsel in helping to solve any problems which may arise.
 - (6) He shall be an ex-officio member of each Synodical Council within the Area.
 - (7) In the above duties he shall be amenable to the Synod concerned.
- b. The President of the Area shall direct, supervise and promote the work of the Church within the Area. His duties in this connection shall include but not be limited to the following:
- (1) He shall attend all meetings of the Synods in his Area, and in conference with the Synodical Councils shall arrange their programs for the fall meetings.
 - (2) He may address communications to any Synod, minister or congregation within the Area.

(3) He shall be a field man, and as such shall visit all congregations within the Area in the interest of the work of the Church.

(4) He shall submit annually a complete and detailed report on his work to the General Council and the Synods within the Area.

Nomination and Election

- 155 When there is a vacancy in the office of Area President, the Synodical Councils within the Area shall constitute an Area Nominating Committee which, after consultation with the General Council, shall submit the names of not more than two candidates. These candidates shall be voted on by each Synod, and the ballot boxes sealed. The Secretaries of the Synods in the Area shall constitute an Area Election Committee, which shall open the ballot boxes, combine the votes of all the Synods within the Area, and tally the results. A majority vote is required to elect.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH

- 156 The Administrative Assistant to the President of the Church shall have such duties as are assigned to him by the President and the General Council. In addition, he shall be the executive head of the Department of Correlation, and shall be responsible for the activities of that Department and also those of the Department of United Promotion.

CABINET ON CORRELATION AND PROMOTION

Membership

- 157 The Cabinet on Correlation and Promotion shall consist of the First Vice-President of the Church, or his designee, as chairman, the chief executive officers of the Boards, Commissions and Auxiliary Organizations of the Church, the Administrative Assistant to the President of the Church, and the Director of United Promotion.

Duties

- 158 It shall be the duty of this Cabinet to make recommendations in the areas of correlation and promotion to the Committee on Correlation and Promotion of the General Council.

Part VII

Discipline and Judicial Procedure

NATURE AND EXERCISE OF DISCIPLINE

- 159 Christian discipline is the exercise of that spiritual authority which the Lord Jesus Christ has appointed in His Church to preserve its purity and honor and to promote the spiritual welfare of its members.
- 160 All members of the Church are subject to its government and discipline.
- 161 The Synod shall have original jurisdiction in relation to ministers and candidates for the ministry; and the Spiritual Council in all other cases; but the higher judicatories may institute proceedings in cases in which the lower have been directed so to do and have refused or neglected to obey.
- 162 An offense is anything in the doctrine, principles or practice of a church member, officer, minister or judicatory that is contrary to the Word of God or to the regulations of the Church.
- 163 Every case in which there is a charge of offense against a member, officer, or minister shall be known as a judicial case. Every other case shall be known as an administrative case.

PARTIES, PROCESS AND TRIAL

- 164 If any member or minister of the Church has knowledge or reliable information of an offense by a member, candidate for the ministry, or minister, which is a proper ground for discipline, he shall prefer a charge in writing, before the proper authority. No other person may institute charges. However, should a scandal arise in the jurisdiction of a Synod, the judicatory concerned may appoint a committee to investigate the scandal. Should the investigation show ground for a charge the Synod or Spiritual Council shall appoint a member or committee to bring the charge, and the trial shall then proceed as hereinafter provided.
- 165 If the offense be such as does not seem to the judicatory in the first instance to require a trial, it may empower its presiding officer or other member or members to visit, admonish or reprove the accused if deemed necessary, and if there be contrition and promise to amend, no further proceedings shall be had.
- 166 The charge shall be in writing and shall set forth the alleged offense; and the specifications shall set forth the facts relied upon to sustain the charge. Each offense shall be set forth as a separate charge; and each specification shall declare, as far as possible, the

time, place and circumstances of the offense, and shall be accompanied with the names of the witnesses.

167 A copy of the charges, together with the specifications, and a notice in writing of the time and place of trial shall be served on the accused at least twenty days before the date fixed for the trial, in person if possible, and otherwise either by leaving it at his last known place of residence with an adult member of his family or household or by mailing it to him by registered letter. The accuser shall have like notice of the time and place of trial. If an accused person does not appear after proof of due notice has been given, the trial may proceed and a decision be rendered in his absence.

168 When an accusation has been brought by a judicatory, it shall appoint a committee of one or more of its members as counsel to conduct the proceedings in all its stages; but the judicatory which appointed the committee may change it, and may also appoint assistant counsel at any stage. The same privilege of engaging counsel shall also be accorded to the accused. A person shall not be eligible as counsel who is not a member of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

169 The witnesses after being sworn or affirmed by the president of the judicatory or by any of its members appointed by him, shall be examined and, if desired, cross-examined, and other competent evidence may be presented.

170 A judicatory may appoint a Commissioner to take any evidence which cannot be secured directly at the trial. Each party shall have notice of the time and place appointed for the taking of such evidence and shall have the right to examine or cross-examine the witnesses.

171 A member of the judicatory may be a witness in a case which comes before it. He shall be qualified as other witnesses are, but after having given his testimony he shall not resume his seat as a member of the judicatory.

172 Exceptions to any of the rulings or proceedings in the trial may be taken by either of the parties. The trial shall be conducted in open or secret session as the majority of the judicatory may determine.

173 The charge or charges, specifications, exceptions to the rulings or proceedings, the decision of the judicatory and the notice of appeal, if any, shall be entered on the minutes of the judicatory; all of which, together with the transcript of the evidence in the case duly filed and authenticated by the secretary of the judicatory, shall constitute the record of the case. If demanded, copies of the record shall be furnished promptly to the parties at their expense.

174 If in the prosecution of an appeal new evidence is offered, which

in the opinion of the appellate judicatory has an important bearing on the case, it may refer the case back to the inferior judicatory for a new trial, or with the consent of the parties may receive the further evidence and decide the case.

- 175 Decisions in judicial proceedings must be rendered by a majority vote of the members present, except that a two-thirds vote of the members present shall be required to expel a member or suspend or depose a minister, elder or deacon from office.

REFERENCES, COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

- 176 All proceedings of the Consistory or Church Council, the Joint Consistory or Joint Church Council, the Spiritual Council, and the Synod may be taken to a superior judicatory by reference, complaint or appeal.

References

- 177 A reference is a submission of a pending matter by a lower to the next higher judicatory, and may be made either for advice or for ultimate decision and trial by the superior. If for advice, the reference only suspends the decision of the inferior judicatory; if for trial, it submits the whole case to the final judgment of the superior. In matters of reference, members of the inferior judicatory may vote in the higher judicatory.
- 178 A judicatory may refuse to give final judgment in a matter of reference, and may remit the whole case either with or without advice to the lower judicatory.
- 179 In all cases of reference the record of the proceedings in the lower judicatory shall be transmitted to the higher judicatory, and the judicatory to which a reference is made shall determine the method of procedure to be adopted for hearing in disposing of such reference.

Complaints

- 180 A complaint is a written statement by one or more persons, subject to the jurisdiction of a lower judicatory, submitted to the next higher judicatory against a particular delinquency, action or decision of such lower judicatory in an administrative case.
- 181 The judicatory against which a complaint is made shall send up its records to the higher judicatory, together with all papers relating to the matter of the complaint.
- 182 The same method of procedure in the hearing of a complaint shall prevail as in the case of an appeal.
- 183 The effect of a complaint, if sustained, may be the reversal in whole

or in part of the action or decision complained of. When a complaint is sustained, the lower judicatory shall be directed how to dispose of the matter.

- 184 Neither the complainant, nor the persons complained of, nor the members of the judicatory complained of, shall vote in the case in any of the judicatories of the Church.

Appeals

- 185 An appeal is the removal of a judicial case by a written representation from a lower to a higher judicatory, and may be taken by either of the original parties from the judgment of the lower judicatory.

- 186 If an appeal is taken from the decision of a judicatory in a judicial case, the judicatory that rendered the decision shall defend its position in the higher judicatory by and through such representatives as it may deem proper to appoint; said representatives, however, shall be ministers or lay members, or both, of the Church.

- 187 Irregularities in the proceedings, refusal to entertain an appeal, refusal of reasonable indulgence to a party on trial, receiving improper, or declining to receive proper testimony, undue haste, manifestation of prejudice in the conduct of a case, mistake or injustice in the decision or in any of the rulings of the judicatory in the matters appertaining to the case, undue severity of sentence, all are good and sufficient reasons for an appeal.

- 188 Written notice of appeal, with duplicate copies of specifications of errors alleged, shall be given, within thirty days after the adjournment of a judicatory, to the secretary of the judicatory appealed from, and in case of his absence or disability or death, to its president, who shall file it, with the records and all papers appertaining to the case, or a certified copy of them, with the secretary of the higher judicatory, on or before the first day of its regular meeting next ensuing the date of the reception of said notice, and shall furnish the chairman of the committee appointed to defend the judicatory with one of the duplicate copies of specifications of errors alleged.

- 189 The appellant shall appear, in person or by counsel, before the judicatory appealed to, at or before the close of the second day's session of its stated meeting, next ensuing the date of the filing of the notice of appeal, prepared to proceed with the appeal. If the appellant does not appear before the judicatory appealed to, and fails to show, to the satisfaction of the judicatory, that said appellant was unavoidably prevented from so doing, the appeal shall be considered abandoned, and the judgment of the lower judicatory shall stand. The judicatory appealed to shall proceed to hear an appeal whether the judicatory

appealed from appears or not, unless it is shown that notice of appeal was not properly served on the judicatory appealed from.

190 All cases of appeal of which the records and papers, or certified copies of them, have been placed in the hands of the secretary of the judicatory appealed to shall be called up by him as soon as possible after the permanent organization of the judicatory; he shall state the names of the original parties, read the accusation and the decision and sentence, state the name of the judicatory appealed from and the names of the appellants, and read the reasons filed for the appeal.

191 In case the secretary of the lower judicatory has failed to file the records of an appeal, he shall be referred to his judicatory to be dealt with as the case may require; and the appellant or the judicatory appealed from may furnish a copy of said records, and provided both shall agree as to its correctness, the same shall be taken as if it had been filed by the secretary.

192 In all cases which shall not have been referred to the Judicial Commission the presiding officer shall appoint a committee whose duty it shall be to take charge of all the records and papers in the case, examine the same thoroughly and

1. Report whether or not the appeal is regular and ready for hearing.
2. Propose to the judicatory the date and hour when the appeal shall be heard.
3. Fix the time to be granted each party to present the case.

193 When the time appointed for the hearing of an appeal shall arrive, it shall have precedence over all other business and then shall be heard and decided unless the judicatory shall decide otherwise.

194 Neither the appellant nor the members of the judicatory appealed from shall have voice or vote in the case in any of the judicatories of the Church.

195 The necessary effect of an appeal is to stay all previous proceedings.

JUDICIAL COMMISSION OF A SYNOD

196 A Synod may appoint a Special Judicial Commission to which it may transmit any reference or any judicial or administrative case for hearing and decision, and in respect of which the Judicial Commission shall be governed by the same rules as the Synod in a like case. It shall bring in a report of its findings to the Synod, and, if the Synod shall approve the report by a majority vote, it shall be the decision of the Synod. The expenses of the Commission shall be guaranteed by the Synod.

JUDICIAL COMMISSION OF THE GENERAL SYNOD

- 197 The General Synod shall elect a Judicial Commission which shall consist of seven ministers and six lay members who shall serve for a period of two years. The term of the members of the Commission shall begin with the close of the meeting of the General Synod at which they are elected. The General Synod may transmit to this Commission any reference or judicial or administrative case for hearing and decision.
- 198 The Commission shall elect from its own members a chairman and secretary, and in the cases transmitted to it shall have the powers prescribed by and conduct its proceedings in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and by-laws governing the trial of such cases before the General Synod.
- 199 Seven members of the Commission, of whom four shall be ministers, shall constitute a quorum. The Commission shall meet during the session of the General Synod to hear such matters as are referred to it, and shall determine the regularity of all the papers, and shall consider the question or questions at issue, and shall then by majority vote come to a decision on each case. It shall be governed by the same rules as the General Synod in a like case, and shall bring in a report of its findings to the General Synod and, if the General Synod shall approve the report by a majority vote, this shall be the final decision of the General Synod.
- 200 Important interests at stake that are likely to suffer by delay between the meetings of the General Synod may be heard by the Judicial Commission during the interval as though the General Synod were in session, if the Commission so decides. In such a case at least thirty days' notice of the time, place and purpose of the meeting shall be given to the parties of the reference, complaint or appeal. The necessary expenses of the Commission in such cases shall be paid by the parties requesting the meeting, but the General Synod shall advance the payment of the same.

RESTORATION

- 201 Members of the Church, deacons, deaconesses, elders, candidates for the ministry or ministers who are under discipline may be reinstated either by the judicatory which disciplined them, or with its consent by a coordinate judicatory, if the evidence of their repentance and amendment is satisfactory.

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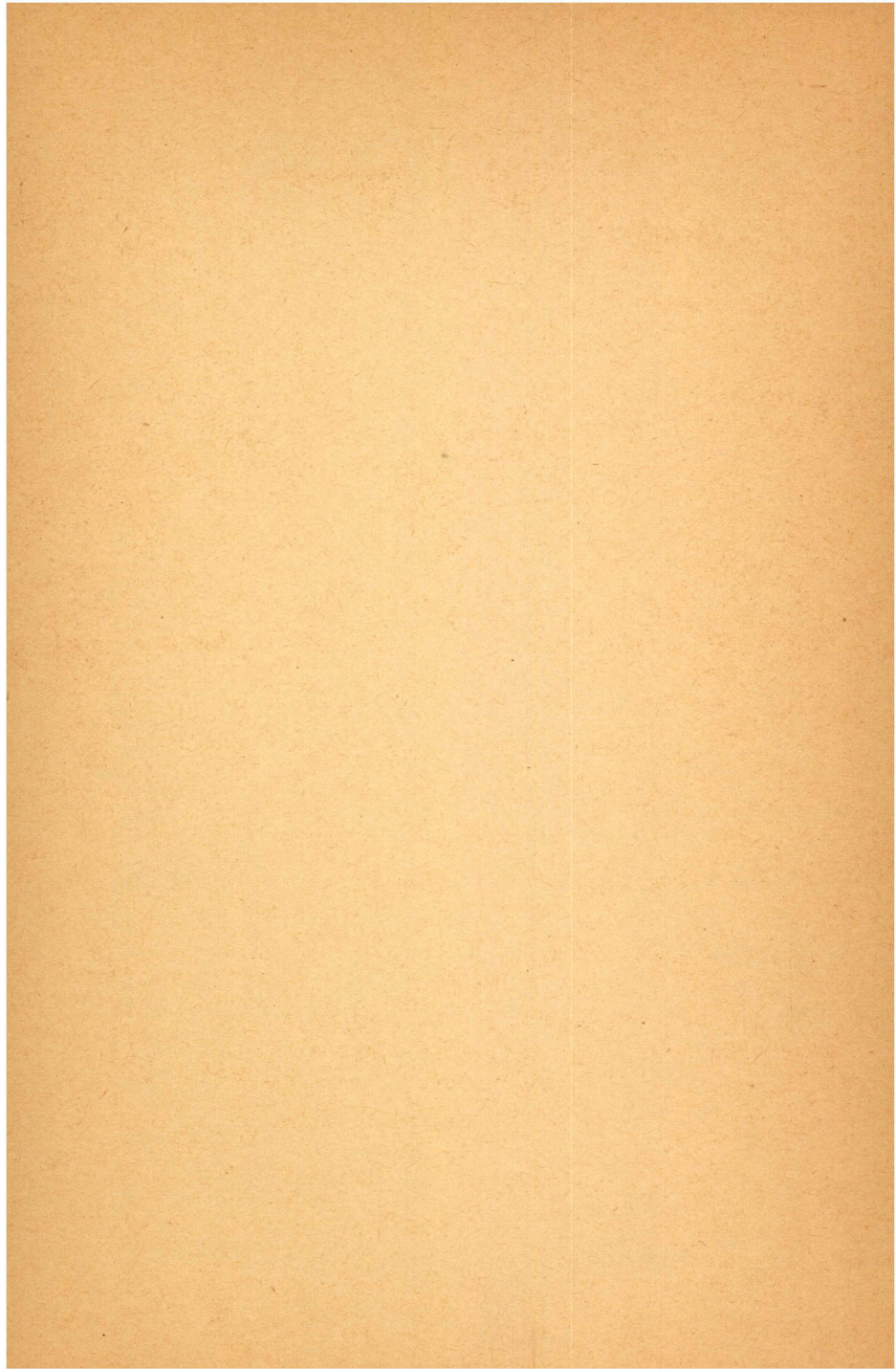
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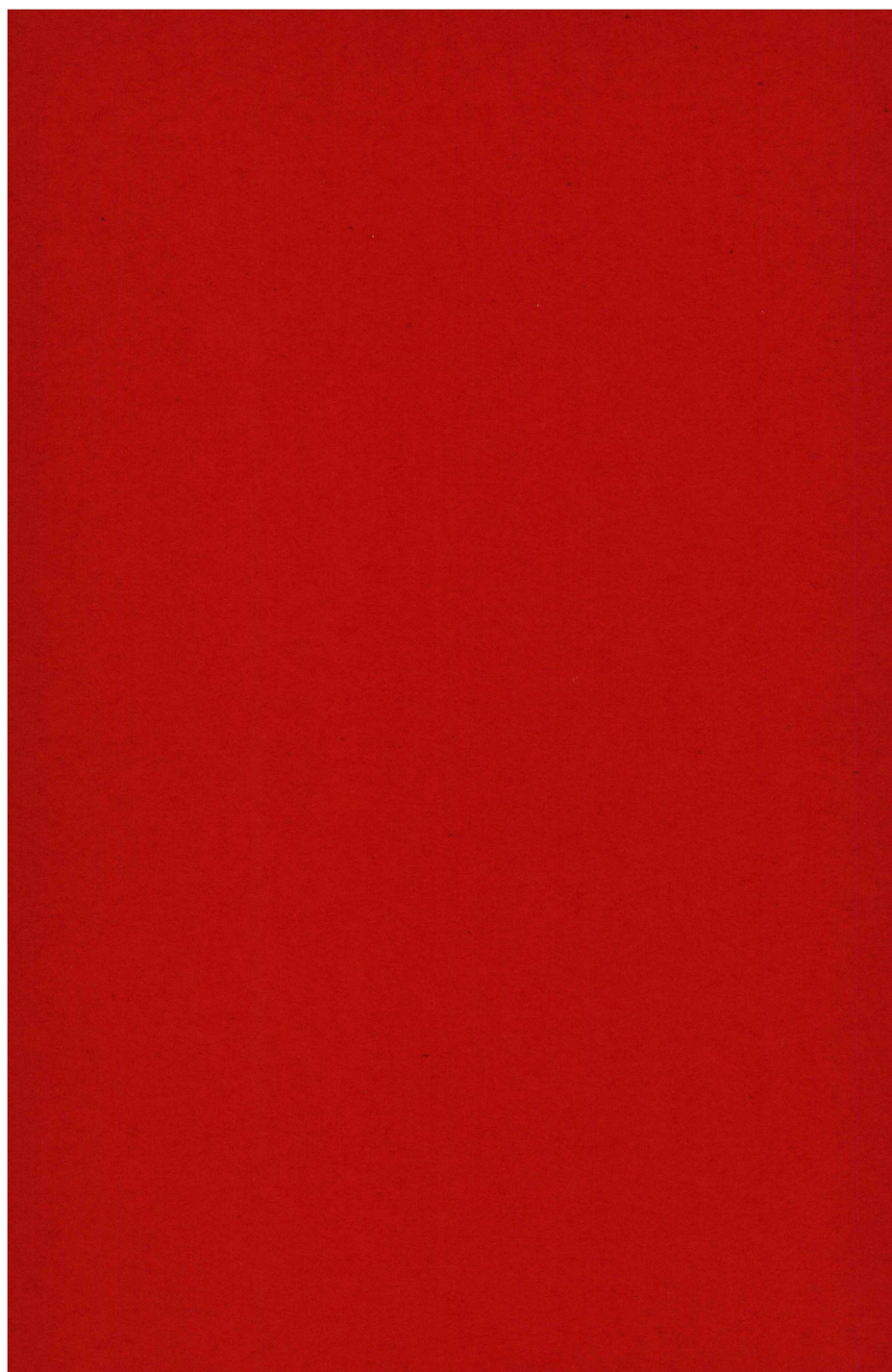
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